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RICH CHEER SUNAK**
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CAPITALISM MEANS MORE... CLIMATE HORRORS



COP26—ALL OUT ON SAT 6 NOV >>PAGES 3 AND 10&11

ANTI-RACISM

**Marches against
borders and for
refugee solidarity**

ANTI-RACISTS marched to the Home Office in London on Saturday to protest against the British and European states' treatment of refugees.

The march followed protests across Britain on Wednesday of last week against the Tories' Nationality and Borders Bill, which criminalises refugees.

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CORONAVIRUS

**NHS in crisis
as Tories allow
Covid to spread**

THE TORIES have learnt nothing from their litany of Covid calamities—and now they look set to repeat them.

The seven-day average of new infections is now close to 40,000. Janet, a cancer nurse, spoke to Socialist Worker about how pressures are hitting every part of the health service.

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PALESTINE

**The past that
Israel wants to
keep hidden**

FOR DECADES, Israel has kept documents describing its ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948 under wraps.

Now, Israeli research organisation Akevot has at least managed to get a list of censored documents.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

'Coronavirus deaths remain mercifully low'

Health secretary **Sajid Javid** after 954 deaths with Covid-19 were recorded in a week

'We on this side have a more convivial, fraternal spirit'

Posho Tory MP **Jacob Rees-Mogg** on why Conservative MPs don't wear masks in parliament

'We are in favour of plan B'

Labour's shadow health secretary **Jonathan Ashworth** last week called for enhanced coronavirus safety measures. But...

'Plan B is the wrong focus. The question we need to ask is why is plan A failing?'

Labour leader **Keir Starmer** ten minutes after Ashworth's statement

'Are care workers skilled workers? Absolutely they are. But they're not skilled workers under our immigration system'

Tory care minister **Gillian Keegan** ties herself in knots over workers' statuses



An abusive police officer is allowed to keep name secret

A MALE police officer who harassed a female domestic abuse victim has been granted lifelong anonymity to "protect his welfare".

The specially trained domestic violence officer bombarded the young woman with messages as he pursued an "improper emotional relationship" with her a misconduct panel heard last week.

He was accused of sending her wink-face emojis with kisses, asked her on a cocktail date, invited her to his home, and gave her hugs and a kiss.

The panel ruled last week that the Hampshire officer's actions amounted to gross misconduct but his name will stay hidden.

It's not the first damning revelation about Hampshire police. In December, six

Police are in the spotlight

members of the force's serious organised crime unit were found guilty of gross misconduct.

A covert bug had recorded them regularly making offensive remarks, including wishing death on foreigners.

An investigation found that part of the office where

a black officer worked was called "Africa corner".

The officers were named in that case.

But in June a former police sergeant who used racist and homophobic language in messages to a fellow officer with was not named.

Deputy chief constable Ben Snuggs told the Guardian newspaper that he did not believe there was a culture problem in Hampshire.

He argued there has been a backlog of disciplinary cases because of Covid that are now coming through the system.

Meanwhile five undercover police officers who infiltrated political groups in the 1970s and 1980s—including the Socialist Workers Party—have been allowed to give evidence in secret to a public inquiry.

They include two officers

who admit they had sexual relationships with women using their fake identities.

It appears that the secrecy will prevent those women from finding out what happened to them.

Sir John Mitting, the retired judge leading the inquiry, made the decision to allow the undercover officers to give their evidence behind closed doors.

Mitting has previously said that women who had sexual relationships with undercover officers have a compelling moral claim to know the identity of the officer.

But in these two recent cases he ruled that the reasons for secrecy were stronger than those for allowing the women to discover the identities of the men.

JUST BEFORE the Cop26 talks, London's Science Museum has "doubled down" on its sponsorship of climate exhibitions by fossil fuel companies by taking funding from a subsidiary of the Adani Group.

The Energy Revolution gallery, opening in 2023, will be sponsored by Adani's Green Energy arm.

Adani is building the biggest coal mine in Australia, which will create 4.6 billion tonnes of carbon pollution. It became a central focus for the Australian school climate strikes. Prepare for protests at the museum.



COLONEL RICHARD Kemp, former head of British forces in Afghanistan, is very upset by protests at his talk at the University of Essex last week. He described how a group of pro-Palestinian activists gathered outside his speech to the university's Conservative Society. No doubt much more terrifying than the British army's actions in Afghanistan.

Will British soldiers face reckoning for Kenya fire?

A GROUP of 1,400 Kenyans goes to court this week to put a compensation claim against the British government.

The Kenyans blame British troops for burning down nearly 50 square kilometres of land earlier this year.

One man, Linus Murangiri, was crushed to death by a vehicle as local people rushed to help put out the fire in Lolldaiga Conservancy on 23 March.

The fire burnt for at least four days in a prized wildlife reserve.

A British soldier in Kenya posted on Snapchat during the incident, "Caused a fire, killed an elephant and feel terrible about it but hey-ho, when in

Kenyans want justice

Rome." Eyewitnesses said it smelt "like a barbecue".

The British army has access to 155,000 hectares of land across nine sites in Kenya for training exercises.

Many of the sites are in Laikipia county, a district that was known as the White Highlands during colonial times because European settlers occupied so much of its land.

Anarchist jailed after the pro-Trump riots

A JUDGE in Florida in the United States has sentenced Daniel Baker, an anti-fascist activist, to 44 months in federal prison.

This is for social media posts that called for people to "rise up" with "every calibre available" against "armed racists" he feared would storm the Capitol on 20 January.

This followed official FBI warnings of violence that day in the wake of the 6 January pro-Trump riots.

Baker, a yoga teacher and emergency medical technician trainee, had no previous criminal convictions and has

already been held for ten months of harsh pre-trial detention.

This included seven months in solitary confinement.

Jason Coody, acting US attorney for the Northern District of Florida, said the sentence "should serve as a significant deterrent to those who would solicit others to join them in conducting criminal acts."

But the sentence is far more than most of those delivered for the 6 January defendants.

They didn't just write on social media but actually used weapons in an effort to overturn an election.

Superprofits for children's home firms

PRIVATE PROVIDERS of children's homes and foster care are making "significant and persistent" profits by charging cash-strapped local authorities elevated prices for increasingly scarce placements.

The largest private providers of children's homes are now charging councils an average of £3,830 a week per child, with an average operating profit margin of 23 percent.

That's according to the Competition and Markets Authority's report on children's social care.

The average weekly price charged by fostering agencies was about £820 a week, with an average operating profit margin of 19 percent.

Billionaires grab \$2 trillion in the pandemic

BILLIONAIRES in the US have grown \$2.1 trillion (£1.5 trillion) richer during the pandemic.

Their collective wealth surged by 70 percent.

Analysis by Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF) and the Institute for Policy Studies Program on Inequality also found the numbers of US billionaires grew.

In March of last year, there were 614 with ten-figure bank accounts. This October, there are 745.

The \$5 trillion (£3.62 trillion) in wealth now held by 745 billionaires is two-thirds more than the wealth held by the bottom 50 percent of all US households.

The analysis says the "fortune of these billionaires over the past 19 months is all the more stark when contrasted with the devastating impact of coronavirus on working people.

"Almost 89 million Americans have lost jobs, over 44.9 million have been sickened by the virus, and over 724,000 have died from it," it says.

Elon Musk, chief executive of Tesla and SpaceX, grabbed the biggest gains.

His wealth grew by a soaraway 751 percent during the pandemic, from £17.8 billion to £151 billion.

Musk's wealth pulled ahead of Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, who trousered "only" a 70 percent increase over the 19-month period.

For the full story go to bit.ly/SWbillionaires

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Leaders lobby for fossil fuels before Cop26 meet

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

WITH JUST days to go before the Cop26 climate conference, world leaders are already weakening their climate promises and protecting the fossil fuel industry.

A new leak made public by the Greenpeace reporting team revealed that several countries will lobby to remove some points in the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report.

And states that are members of Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) are organising to remove recommendations for a rapid phase out of fossil fuels.

The sixth IPCC report says that countries should encourage people to move to plant-based diets.

So countries that are big exporters of meat and dairy, such as Brazil and Argentina, are also looking to lobby to change the IPCC report.

The Greenpeace leak exposes over 32,000 comments by governments, academics and corporations made after the draft of the IPCC's report was released.

One of the leaks shows how an Australian government official denied that burning coal leads to higher greenhouse gas emissions and rising global temperatures. Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal.

Saudi Arabia rejected the use of the word "transformation" in the report. Instead, the third largest oil producer preferred phrases such as "transitioning" and "planned interventions".

Governments are also keen to cover up their climate crimes, according to the leak.

Meanwhile, Opec will reportedly ask the IPCC to remove a document that seeks to expose "lobby activism", which creates barriers to climate policy being made. Another part of

A COAL mine in Australia, the world's biggest exporter of the material

the leak reveals that governments are asking for carbon capture technology to be more widely used to reduce emissions.

Global

"These comments show the tactics some countries are willing to adopt to obstruct and delay action to cut emissions", climate scientist Simon Lewis, professor of global change science at University College London, told Greenpeace Unearthed.

"On the eve of the crucial Cop26 talks there is, to me, a clear public interest in knowing what these governments are saying behind the scenes", he added.

The IPCC has no obligation to

follow or respond to any country's government. A spokesperson said that its processes were "designed to protect" against lobbying.

But the leak reveals what many of us already knew. Governments are ready to ignore the science and continue their unshakeable support for the oil and gas industry.

In the same week as the leak, the UN Environment Programme (Unep) issued a warning that fossil fuel production must be cut by half.

Unep's 2021 report detailed how fossil fuel use is projected to go up despite the many promises by world leaders to cut back on emissions and achieve net zero. Some of the countries that were revealed to still

provide significant support for the fossil fuel industry include Germany, Britain, India, Norway, Australia and the US.

The authors added that fossil fuel use looks to increase until 2040. All of this, the report said, will be inconsistent with limiting temperature rises to under 1.5 degrees Celsius.

At the protests against Cop26, activists must rage against world leaders and their cosy relationship with fossil fuel bosses that are leading us to climate breakdown.

 **What's your story?**
Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Welcoming fuel bosses

ORGANISERS OF Cop26 have only recently announced that major oil and gas corporations won't play an official role in the conference.

It was revealed that companies such as BP had been approaching government officials to participate in the conference but have been denied a formal role.

Some analysts have heralded this decision as impressive.

But fossil fuel companies should never have been allowed near a climate change

conference in the first place. And the sponsors of Cop26 still include energy companies that primarily rely on fossil fuels such as SSE, Scottish Power and National Grid.

These companies will be given every opportunity to push for continuing the oil and gas industry while greenwashing their climate crimes.

Cop26 might not officially give companies such as Shell and BP the large platform they want. But it hasn't thrown out oil and gas bosses altogether.

Unproven technology

Why carbon capture can't save us

THE TORIES and other world leaders say that carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology is the best way to reduce emissions.

While CCS reduces emissions, it would keep the fossil fuel industry running.

That's why those in power and the fossil fuel bosses find it appealing.

CCS might reduce CO2 from the smokestacks that pump out emissions, but, as a process, it doesn't deliver net-zero emissions as it promises.

Even if the process could harvest all emissions, which at most power stations it doesn't, other operations involved in CCS still produce emissions.

Emissions

The transportation of CO2—either through reinforced steel pipelines, over land or across the sea to where it will be stored—adds to emissions produced.

If the whole process is accounted for, power plants that use CCS need around 25 percent more energy to work than those without.

This means that plants using CCS will often burn more fossil fuels than those that don't.

In a report in the Nature Energy Journal in 2019, a group of researchers made it clear that the money being pumped into CCS should instead go to renewable energy projects.

They found that renewable projects need less energy to build and run and produce less carbon emissions.

CCS is ineffective, expensive and doesn't meet net zero promises.

Yet world leaders continue to put their faith in it because it allows fossil fuel companies to keep making profits.

The only solution to significantly cut back on emissions is to stop burning fossil fuels entirely.

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NHS in deep crisis as Tories allow Covid-19 cases to spread

by YURI PRASAD

THE TORIES have learnt nothing from their litany of Covid calamities—and now they look set to repeat them.

Doctors' organisations, health service bosses and the government's own scientists warn that Britain is in the midst of a new viral wave that could devastate the NHS.

The head of the NHS Confederation was among many that begged the Tories to re-introduce the most elementary protections—known as "Plan B".

These measures include the mandatory wearing of face masks in indoor spaces and advice to work from home where possible.

But chancellor Rishi Sunak joined other ministers in putting his fingers firmly in his ears.

Speaking to the BBC's Andrew Marr Show on Sunday, Sunak said, "At the moment the data does not suggest that we should be immediately moving to Plan B".

He would not even commit to wearing a mask in parliament.

What nonsense. The seven-day average of new infections is now close to 40,000. Two weeks ago it was just 30,175. And while the chancellor shrugs his shoulders, well over a hundred people are dying from Covid every day.

Hospitals in Cornwall last week declared a "critical incident" due the pressures they are facing. The local NHS trust reported up to 100 people waiting to be seen, with 25 ambulances waiting outside.

Hours

The knock on effect was that even some patients with chest pain were forced to wait more than eleven hours for an ambulance.

Will Warrender, head of the regional ambulance service, said, "Two years ago, on an average week, we would lose about 400 hours in handover delays. On Tuesday 19 October, one single day, we lost 900 hours. I think that says it all."

Why won't Labour step up?

THE TRADE unions and the broader labour movement have a tremendous responsibility.

Not only is the safety of millions of workers at stake, but the survival of the NHS lies in the balance.

Meanwhile the Labour Party also refuses to call for more safety measures. Keir Starmer shares

Starmer shares blame

FIGURE IT OUT

39,962

The rolling seven-day average of new Covid-19 infections as Socialist Worker went to press

30,175

What it was two weeks ago

820

Weekly deaths with Covid-19 recorded on the death certificate

There has been a sharp rise in the number of Covid-related admissions in nearby Plymouth in recent weeks.

Some experts say this could be the result of the failure of the private and unaccredited Immensa test processing lab in Wolverhampton.

About 43,000 people, mostly in south west England, were wrongly told they did not have Covid.

Spike

It is thought that many of them could then have unknowingly passed the virus on, leading to a large spike in infections.

"In the long list of Covid disasters and scandals, this is pretty near the top," said professor Alan McNally, who helped set up the Lighthouse Covid testing lab at Milton Keynes.

The NHS crisis is far from restricted to A&E, or just south west England.

In Wales, waiting lists to see hospital specialists have grown to a massive 657,539. That's a record which is equivalent to more than 20 percent of the Welsh population.

And it means thousands of people, many in terrible pain, are waiting for an appointment that only seems to get further away.



What's your story?

Email with your ideas
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PATIENTS ACROSS Britain are forced to wait hours in ambulances before getting into hospital

Relentless pressure leaves hospitals short staffed, says cancer nurse

JANET, A cancer nurse in central London, spoke to Socialist Worker about how pressures are hitting every part of the health service.

"For the first time in my nearly four decades of nursing, we are finding that we can't fill temporary bank shifts for nurses on our ward," she said.

"People who might previously have looked to do extra work in the run up to Christmas won't come forward. They are just too knackered and stressed—even if they could really use the money.

Terrible

"That means if someone on our ward rings in sick we all know we are going to have a terrible day.

"It will be non-stop running from patient to patient, relentless pressure—and getting home much too late."

Janet says she and the other staff will do their best to make

Ward staff are tired and stressed

sure patients don't suffer. But she says patients always know when the ward is short staffed.

"Patients become really apologetic and reluctant to let you know when they need something, or if they have a question.

"What worries me now is that we are creating a generation of nurses that don't know any different to this level of

pressure." Continual stress can have a terrible effect on nurses, says Janet.

"Sometimes the only way to cope is to close your eyes and ears in a bid to protect yourself. But in that kind of environment, important things can get missed."

Turnover

And, says Janet, high staff turnover means wards are becoming ever less experienced.

"Recently, I looked at a picture of the staff on our ward taken just three years ago. All but three of the 25 of us have left since then.

"Earlier in my career people used to stay.

"It wasn't unusual to work alongside people for five or ten years. That's all gone now.

"That's what relentless pressure does, it breaks everything up."

HEALTH WORKERS' UNIONS

GMB union could call strikes in 2022 after winter vote

THE GMB union is preparing to ballot thousands of health workers across England as part of the fight over NHS pay.

The union, which organises many ambulance staff and others, is demanding a 15 percent rise. The government has imposed just 3 percent.

The union's strike ballot will open on 10 November and close on 15 December.

Any strikes would

take place in the new year.

One London ambulance worker told Socialist Worker there is huge anger over low pay.

They said the union should link that fight with others over the growing crisis in the NHS.

"People are at their wits' end. Something needs to happen to say the health service cannot be run down the way it is now. This

strike vote is a great opportunity to do that."

GMB members in Wales are set to vote on a new pay offer from the Welsh government.

The enhanced package includes an extra 1 percent pay rise—but is not consolidated.

That means it won't apply in the following years.

That falls far below the union's demand and members should reject it massively.

Win a big strike vote to keep pressure on nurses' leaders

THE nurses' RCN union is next week set to launch a consultative ballot on industrial action over pay.

Union members have already rejected the government's 3 percent imposed pay offer decisively.

A massive 92 percent of those who voted in England said the award is unacceptable. An even higher percentage said no in Wales.

The new ballot will ask nurses whether they are prepared to take industrial action to win a better deal.

The union has been fighting for a minimum 12.5 percent increase.

This is to reflect the way nurses' pay has fallen in the last ten years—while the RPI inflation rate now stands at 4.9 percent.

Some nurses have already reported that the paltry pay rise

was enough to push them into having to pay higher pension contributions.

That means that they are now likely poorer after the pay rise than they were before.

Consistently low pay in the NHS is driving huge staff shortages and means that many wards are permanently understaffed.

The resulting stress is driving workers out of the NHS, and it putting patients in danger. RCN leaders say they

will look at the results of the ballot before deciding their next move.

But members have already expressed their anger and the union risks dissipating the strong feeling for action revealed by the first ballot.

Activists should throw everything at winning a big vote for strikes to keep pressuring union leaders—and to encourage workers in other unions.

Angry GPs reject Tory plans

GPs ARE threatening industrial action in protest at government attempts force them to see all patients that request a "face to face" appointment.

The Tories' plan includes "naming and shaming" surgeries that see too few patients in person.

The British Medical Association's GPs' committee voted unanimously last week to reject it. "GPs

have been left with no alternative but to take this action," said Dr Richard Vautrey, chair of the GPs' committee.

"All efforts to persuade the government to introduce a workable plan that will bring immediate and longer-term improvement for doctors and their patients have so far come to nought,"

It is not certain that

GPs will hold a ballot because the BMA's ruling council has to agree. But the huge anger among local doctors is reflected among many leaders.

A strong yes vote in any consultative ballot could lead to a formal vote.

Action may include refusal to cooperate with ministers' instructions and other measures designed to reduce workload.

Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

DEMAND BETTER THAN TORIES' COVID PLAN A OR B

THETORIES are risking tens of thousands of lives by refusing to consider any new measures to deal with the rising number of Covid-19 cases.

But what should be the alternative? There are basic measures that any government should implement immediately.

School pupils' return to classrooms in August and September and university students going back to campuses have fuelled the sharp rise.

Young people get infected, and then they can pass the disease on to older people they mix with.

So at the very least schools should enforce mask wearing and social distancing to reduce contamination.

The NEU union is right to demand adequate ventilation systems, cuts in workload, more workers and real support for staff sick or suffering long Covid.

Close contacts of anyone testing positive should immediately isolate.

And if there are large numbers of cases in a school or area then the affected schools should close until the spike has been overcome. Ultimately teachers

should be given the authority to leave work, send pupils home or collectively shut schools in the face of surging cases.

If this happens teachers, pupils or parents must not be made to pay. Parents should be able to isolate with their children and still receive full sick pay, support and free school meals if needed.

But to make conditions as safe as possible we must demand more. Some measures beyond the Tories' plan have been used in Scotland and Wales. But they did not go far enough.

Sick pay must be guaranteed for all. Often key workers who work in crowded spaces such as cleaners, nurses, health assistants

and delivery drivers are on poverty pay.

An unpaid sick day for some is completely unthinkable.

Not being able to afford to stay home if showing Covid symptoms forces people to risk spreading the illness to workmates and others.

Adequate testing systems in care homes, schools and other public areas must be available on demand. This would allow groups of people to isolate efficiently and quickly if needed.

And anyone who can work from home should immediately be told to do so.

But the Tories—with the blood of tens of thousands of unnecessary deaths on their hands—reject these basic measures.

They claim that schools will remain open to defend children's vital education and development. But they don't really care about that.

For the Tory party, keeping children out of school, let alone closing schools, means taking parents out of the workplaces. That's the number one concern, keeping profits flowing.

There is no hope for Covid safety with capitalists in charge.

“**People should be able to isolate with full sick pay, support and free school meals**”

COPS STILL SPY ON LEFT

A POLICE unit in Wales tried to recruit a Black Lives Matter (BLM) activist as an informant—the latest evidence of institutional racism within the police.

Shutting down protests, infiltrating groups and planting informants to spy on their activity are well rehearsed police tactics.

Lowri Davies, an organiser of the Swansea BLM group, says police used "distressing" techniques to manipulate her into giving them information. Two cops attempted

to convince her to become an informant during phone calls and a car ride around Swansea.

Cops claimed her purpose would be to get information on the far right, but later showed interest in gathering information about left groups.

This is the first publicly shared evidence that police attempted to infiltrate the BLM movement.

But the police have a long history of spying on groups that threaten the state's security. The current inquiry into undercover

cops who spied on more than 1,000 political groups for more than four decades aims to be a whitewash. But it has confirmed some of what went on.

Cops spied on victims of racism and police brutality, including the family of murdered Stephen Lawrence. And undercover cops entered false relationships with women they were spying on.

This week's examples show the police have not changed at all. Their target is not racists but those who fight racism.

Breakfast in



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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



The free market right is wrong on inflation

THE ALARM bells about inflation are ringing ever more shrilly across the world economy. Huw Pill, the new chief economist of the Bank of England, predicts that the official British inflation rate will hit five percent early next year.

In the United States the annual rate of core inflation reached four percent in September, the highest it's been in almost 25 years. Why is inflation rising?

The orthodox explanation is based on the famous statement by one of the two ideological godfathers of neoliberalism, Milton Friedman, that "inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon." He argued that if the money supply rises faster than production, demand will increase more than the supply of goods and services, pulling up prices.

Faced with the pandemic, states followed Maynard Keynes, who advocated intervention in the economy, rather than Friedman. Central banks hugely boosted the money supply.

They bought up financial assets as a way of pumping money into markets that froze in March 2020. Meanwhile, governments in advanced economies massively increased their spending to fill the gap left by the collapse of private demand.

To a large extent, they financed this by extra borrowing. In the US and Britain, the Treasury bonds governments sold to borrow were bought mainly by the central banks. This modern equivalent of printing money was used to keep economies afloat. As economic historian Adam Tooze put it, "budget constraints don't seem to exist—money is a mere technicality."

But this is heresy from the point of view of what has been the reigning economic orthodoxy since the 1970s. Its adherents argue that the extra spending and borrowing has boosted the money supply, causing the rise in inflation.

There are two problems with this analysis. The first is that its exponents have been crying wolf for over a decade.

The policies they denounce began in a more moderate form in 2007-8, when central banks responded to the global financial crisis by creating money and pumping it into the financial system. Free marketeers denounced this as an abomination that would lead to hyper-inflation. In fact inflation stayed very low or was even negative until very recently.

Secondly, there is a better explanation for the inflationary surge, which focuses on supply rather than demand.

The economic shutdown provoked by the pandemic disrupted the transnational supply chains that radiate from Asian factories to Europe and North America. According to the Financial Times (FT), manufacturing delivery times have lengthened in recent months at the fastest rate since records began in 1998.

Bullwhip

"It is advanced economies that wait for parts and goods largely produced by China and other Asian countries that are most affected. Call it the bullwhip effect—where changes in demand have a bigger impact the further along the supply chain you go—in action," said the FT.

"Delivery times have worsened the most in the tech and auto sectors, where they are short of microchips, but manufacturers of food and beverages and personal items are experiencing near-record disruptions." However caused, inflation is cutting into living standards. The bosses and their economists are most afraid of a "wage-price spiral"—in other words, workers reacting by demanding higher wages and capitalists defending their profits by raising prices further.

This isn't happening yet. According to a survey by XpertHR, over four fifths of British private employers plan to raise wages, taking the median pay award to 2.5 percent, well below inflation. But the labour shortages that are another effect of the pandemic may give many groups of workers the power to defend their real wages.

The free market right is preparing to strike back. Pill is a protege of Otmar Issing, the first chief economist of the European Central Bank and a disciple of the other neoliberal godfather, Friedrich von Hayek. Ignoring how central banks have been actively intervening to maintain demand, Pill told the FT the Bank of England is "an institution that's in the price stability business".

Meanwhile, chancellor Rishi Sunak, when asked by a journalist to choose between Keynes and Friedman, opted for Friedman. We've been warned. Winter—higher interest rates and Thatcherite austerity—is coming.

Royal Parks strikers lobby bosses for deal on sick pay

by NICK CLARK

STRIKING outsourced workers at several London parks were set to end a month long strike with a rally on Friday of this week.

The strikers are cleaners and playground attendants who work in London's Royal Parks, including Hyde Park, Regent's Park and St James's Park.

They are demanding that their employer, Just Ask Services, gives them the same pay and conditions as workers employed directly.

Their action has already forced bosses to make several concessions.

But the strikers were still fighting to make Just Ask give them more than statutory sick pay, as Socialist Worker went to press.

"They say that if you've worked here for five years you're entitled to six days' sick pay," playground attendant Antonietta told Socialist Worker.

Pandemic

"At the end of the day, we're the ones on the ground. We're the ones that worked through the pandemic. They had to open up the parks for exercise, seven days a week throughout."

She added, "You can see the majority of us are black and minority ethnic. And the majority of the trustees are white. It doesn't look good does it?"

On top of that, most of the workers are employed on part time contracts, but use overtime to make up full time hours. That means bosses can dodge paying



full time holiday pay. "It's exploitation," one striker told Socialist Worker.

"They will tell you your contract is for two days and they will ask you to work six days. Sometimes we do seven days."

"But because our contract is two days, we don't get the holiday money."

Officials from the workers' PCS and UVW unions say

STRIKERS IN Hyde Park (above) They had to work through the pandemic (left)

PICTURES: GUY SMALLMAN

they've got Just Ask bosses to make concessions on most of the workers' demands—except sick pay.

That's why the strikers lobbied the Royal Parks board of trustees, who had been due to meet at their headquarters in Hyde Park.

One of the trustees, Camden council's Labour leader Georgia Gould, offered strikers support outside—but found that the meeting had been moved at short notice.

Bosses like to use outsourcing companies such as Just Ask Services so they can employ workers on the cheap—and wash their hands of responsibility for pay and conditions.

"It would be much simpler if we were employed in

house," said Antonietta. "That's what we're asking for." But the workers know their strike is having an impact.

"There are quite a lot of us missing on the site," Antonietta said. "In the playground that we work in they just have to put anyone in."

"You're supposed to be first aid trained to work in there, but at the minute they haven't got people."

"So they are struggling."

Donate to the strike fund at bit.ly/donate-royal-parks
Messages of support to outsourcedworkers@pcs.org.uk

What's your story?

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

Care home workers won't be tricked by billionaire

WORKERS AT the Sage care home in north London were back on the picket line last week over bosses' failure to meet their demands.

The UVW union members protested outside Freshwater House—and briefly occupied the lobby—in central London last Thursday.

It's home to companies headed by Benzion Freshwater, a billionaire property developer who sits on Sage's board of trustees.

They are demanding



Sage care strikers last week

the same pay and conditions as NHS workers—at least £12 an hour—and union recognition for the UVW.

Talks have led nowhere and UVW members are angry at the dismissal of two long-standing workers.

Care worker Julia told Socialist Worker that management made promises, but haven't delivered on them. "The situation for us has changed" she said. "I would actually say it's got worse."

"We went from having

four or five people working on one floor now we are sometimes down to two."

"You are expected to do the same amount of work as four people, and it's just not possible you can't provide care to the same level. It's dangerous."

Striker Bile told pickets, "We are skilled workers and we won't be treated like robots anymore. We won't stop if they don't give us what we want—we'll keep going."

Longer online at socialistworker.co.uk

Anti-racists rally against vicious Tory borders bill

Demonstrations last week showed there is opposition to the racist agenda, reports Isabel Ringrose

AROUND 600 anti-racists protested in Parliament Square, central London, on Wednesday last week to show resistance to the Tories' Nationality and Borders Bill.

The protest was organised by Together With Refugees—a coalition group of refugee charities—as the bill went through the committee stage in the House of Commons. It was joined by Stand Up To Racism.

Home secretary Priti Patel's new bill will criminalise refugees who travel to Britain using so-called "illegal" means. Refugees who travel on boats or in the back of lorries could face prison and their asylum applications being rejected.

And so could those who travel through a "safe country" on route to Britain.

The proposed law also makes it illegal to "assist" refugee crossings—including rescuing people who are drowning.

Rebuild

Sarha arrived in Britain a few weeks ago on a plane out of Kabul, Afghanistan.

"I wish no one was forced to leave their homes because of war," she told the protest. "Give us a chance to rebuild our lives."

Hundreds of people protested in towns and cities across Britain on the same night.

At the protest placards read, "No one is illegal," and, "Refugees are welcome here."

Labour peer Lord Alf Dubs—who campaigned to let child refugees into Britain—slammed the bill as a "disgrace".

"It treats refugees like criminals, not victims," he told Socialist Worker. "It sets a terrible standard for how to treat those fleeing for safety."

Dubs slammed the Tories' myth that the bill will prevent people smuggling—calling this a "lie". "Legal routes to safety would take those forced to use people smugglers and give them aid," he

READ MORE

You can find out more about the borders bill, refugee campaigns and the Tories assaults at these links.

- Read the full report online at bit.ly/refugeebillprotest
- Border crossings, asylum and migration—the truth behind the headlines at bit.ly/bordercrossarticle
- Calls for resistance at Stand Up To Racism international conference at bit.ly/sutrconfreport

explained. "We can't close the door on the vulnerable, especially after what they've been through."

Alice, who heard about the protest through Student Action for Refugees, said the bill was "terrifying".

"The government creates fear and spreads blame over to refugees to scare people," she said.

"We have to protest because we're not getting listened to, it's easy to ignore people online. But now they can't ignore us."

Andy from the Refugee Council told Socialist Worker that clause 10 of the bill would "create two classes" of refugees based on how they came to Britain. And this would see "the lower class having much less rights".

"The 1951 UN Refugee Convention states a refugee cannot be penalised for the method they used to claim asylum," he explained.

"The bill will introduce a dangerous precedent, and the harmful narrative used to justify it demonises refugees. We have to mobilise public support against it."

Campaigners also held protests in Bournemouth, Glasgow, Lancaster, Oxford, Sheffield, Stoke and other areas.

Anti-racists must resist the whole bill and the Tories' attempt to scapegoat refugees for problems in society.



PROTESTING FOR refugees in London last week

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Protesters rage against Britain's and the EU's cruel rejection of refugees

ANTI-RACISTS MARCHED to the Home Office in London on Saturday to protest against the British and European states' treatment of refugees.

The action, called by Amnesty UK Europe, began at the Italian embassy. The Italian government is working with Libya's coast guard to return refugees to the north African country—often to torture, rape and extortion.

Laura, who joined the march, told Socialist Worker, "It's really important people show they care about what's happening to refugees."

"Protesting means we get noticed."

Saturday marked the first day of the trial of Italy's former interior minister, far right Matteo Salvini.

He has been accused of preventing a rescue boat from docking in August 2019, leaving 147 refugees stranded in the Mediterranean for 19 days.

A speaker at the protest, Magda, spoke about the situation on the European Union's (EU) border between Poland and Belarus.

Refugees attempting to get into EU member state Poland are being

pushed back into the forests. "But locals have organised support groups, making food and donating clothes and tents," Magda said.

The protest then marched to the Maltese embassy, chanting, "Refugees are welcome here."

Outside the embassy activists spoke about the El Hiblu Three. They are three refugees aged 19, 16 and 15 who negotiated passage for 108 migrants on an oil tanker off the coast of Libya. Back in March 2019, over 100 migrants were rescued by the ship from a sinking dinghy.

Coast

They were told to head back to the Libyan coast, but the three young refugees negotiated a route to Malta.

The Maltese government charged them with terrorism—meaning they could face life imprisonment.

Thushara is a Stand Up To Racism activist in Extinction Rebellion.

She told Socialist Worker, "No one moves away from a situation that's good for them. Climate change has seen impoverished countries that can't deal with the

changes get worse. People are then forced to go where they have a better life and can feed their children."

Protesters headed for the Home Office chanting, "Priti Patel hear us say, refugees are here to stay," and, "Stop, stop the borders bill."

Action was also called in solidarity in Norwich, Nottingham, Southampton and Tenby in west Wales.

Anti-racists have to mobilise against the Tories' Nationality and Borders Bill as it moves through parliament.

■ STAND UP To Racism has put out an early call for anti-racist events and actions across Britain on 19 March 2022—UN anti-racism day.

They will be part of a coordinated global response to the rise of racism and fascism.

And they will come just weeks before the first round of the French presidential election where the far right is making a strong challenge.

On other pages...

The strange spectacle of the US far right at large >>Page 13



Protesters hit streets to confront a military coup in Sudan

by CHARLIE KIMBER

HUGE PROTESTS gathered in Sudan's capital Khartoum and other major cities at the start of this week in response to a military coup.

There is a chance that far from crushing the yearning for democracy and change, the military's action may accelerate the process.

Soldiers launched the coup just before dawn on Monday. They arrested several members of the transitional government—which is a combination of civilian and military figures.

Civilian prime minister Abdallah Hamdok and at least four ministers were reported to be among those detained.

The coup is the latest turn in a series of revolts and extraordinary initiatives by ordinary people that has spanned nearly three years.

For six months at the start of 2019 mass mobilisation from below, punctuated by a series of local and then general strikes, were the driving force for change.

They first brought down the repressive rule of Omar al-Bashir who had ruled for 30 years since a military coup.

Then ordinary workers and wider groups of the poor and oppressed defeated the military's attempts to stall real change.

Hundreds of thousands of people joined sit-ins in city squares. They demanded an end to military rule.

But they also began creating basic elements of running parts of society themselves—food distribution, security to defend the revolutionaries, medical provision and more. A general strike in May brought large parts of the economy to a halt, and

BACK STORY

Mass mobilisations rocked the 30-year dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir in 2019. Strikes and protests demanded real democracy

- Hundreds of thousands of people occupied city squares and organised basic functions such as food distribution

- The military tried to regain the initiative by smashing protests but they did not win

- A rotten power sharing agreement has since been in place

workers began to create networks of resistance. In June 2019, trying to thwart the uprising, the military and its allies stormed the Khartoum sit-in and killed at least 120 people.

But the military could not crush the resistance.

Transition

A rotten agreement in August 2019 saw “power-sharing” between the Transitional Military Council which took over after Bashir was overthrown, and the pro-democracy movement.

It was headed by lieutenant general Abdel Fattah al-Burhan—who has now led the coup.

In October 2019 and July 2020 people took to the streets demanding that the transition away from military rule sped up.

The battle between the military and democrats has sharpened in recent days. The military absurdly tried to organise “popular” protests calling for them to take over. But they were outnumbered by big marches calling for civilian rule. Now the military has swooped in.

It will be crucial for the movement to abandon all illusions in negotiated agreements with the generals and instead sweep them away.

They must not rely on powers such as Britain and the US who will demand “calm”.

And revolutionaries have to fight to set up workers' councils and armed self-defence to bring about real change.

PROTESTERS IN Khartoum last week demanded transition to civilian rule in Sudan

ISRAEL

Human rights groups banned as ‘terrorist’

ISRAEL HAS banned and branded six Palestinian human rights groups, charities and civil society organisations as “terrorist organisations”.

The move comes after a Palestinian mass revolt earlier this year shone a light on Israel's racism and violent occupation.

The six include Addameer, which supports Palestinian political prisoners, and Al-Haq, a human rights organisation that

works with the United Nations. Addameer gives free representation and legal advice to hundreds of Palestinians locked in Israeli prisons.

Al-Haq records breaches of international humanitarian law in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, which are under Israeli military occupation.

Other banned organisations are the Union of Agricultural Work Committees and Defense

for Children International—Palestine.

The banning effectively outlaws the organisations' activities and allows Israeli authorities to close their offices, seize their assets and jail their staff.

It comes after violence by Israeli forces and settlers against Palestinians has intensified as the occupation becomes more entrenched.

Nick Clark

BRAZIL

Bolsonaro should face court for his crimes

A CONGRESSIONAL inquiry has found that far right Brazilian president, Jair Bolsonaro should be tried for “crimes against humanity” for his handling of the Covid pandemic.

A 1,180-page document released by the upper house's parliamentary commission accuses Bolsonaro of ten crimes.

These include incitement to commit crimes and the misuse of public funds.

One main accusation is that the government “omitted and chose to act in a non-technical and reckless

manner in the fight against the pandemic. Deliberately exposing the population to a concrete risk of massive infection.”

Currently Covid has killed over 600,000 people in Brazil. The report labels this an “intentional crime”.

Bolsonaro responded that he was “guilty of nothing”.

Already Bolsonaro's approval ratings have been on a downward spiral. Polls overwhelmingly predict that he will lose to ex-president Lula da Silva in next year's presidential elections.



Prime minister Abdallah Hamdok



Brazil's president Bolsonaro is facing crisis as his poll ratings drop

COP26 CONFERENCE ‘WE’RE TURNING GLASGOW INTO A CITY IN REVOLT’

For months, activists from disparate campaigns and backgrounds have been working to mount a challenge to the climate criminals visiting Glasgow in November. **Sophie Squire** spoke to some of them about what they want to happen

STRIKES, WIRE globes, climate rebels and Greta Thunberg are all coming to Glasgow for the Cop26 climate conference.

The most exciting activities—and the most meaningful discussions—will not be found within the heavily fortified walls of the conference but at the protests against it.

The goal of the mobilisations is to show that ordinary people will not stand by as the bosses and world leaders destroy the planet.

Activists have been preparing for some time—and marches and protests aren’t the only things they have planned. There should be some direct action.

And, after the world leaders who attended Cop26 leave Glasgow, activists will hold a People’s Summit for Climate Justice.

That will be an opportunity to discuss where next for the movement and will feature speakers from across the globe.

Cop26 is an opportunity for the climate movement to reappear as the force that can challenge those at the top who are killing the environment—and to confront their system too.

‘We are prepared for action’

Chia Extinction Rebellion activist

EXTINCTION Rebellion (XR) activist Chia says protests at Cop26 can provide hope that climate breakdown can be averted.

“There’s a lot of climate anxiety and grief going on” she told Socialist Worker. “I’m in my 20s, and I’m starting to ask myself whether I’ll be able to have my own family.

“For me, the protests can be an antidote to this. I’m still hopeful, and I use that hope to keep going.”

Chia explained the kind of action XR would be taking while Cop26 is in progress.

“We’ve got a lot of different actions prepared, but of course, I can’t go into too much detail about them.”

“There will be different themes—a big one will be on ‘greenwashing’.

“We need to say that companies such as SSE, which is attending Cop, are trying to make out they are green. But that will never be possible for a fossil fuel company.”

Chia added that direct action must be a vital part of Cop26 protests.

“As a member of XR, I’m passionate about non-violent direct action. People don’t have their voices heard politically, and so, of course, you look for a more radical alternative and direct action can be a way of making those in power listen.

“But I also think that for direct action to be effective, you have to involve as many people as possible.

Chia is Outreach Link for XR Glasgow, which means that she’ll be in charge of street stalls so the group can have conversations with as many residents as possible.

“I think we really need to spread awareness. We need to say to people that some parts of Glasgow will be underwater in the future.

“We’ve built a great coalition of activists and supporters around us for Cop26 but for the coming struggles we need so many more.”



Chia is an activist with the Extinction Rebellion direct action campaign



‘I’m looking forward to talking to people who have come from across the globe’

Arnd Drossel Artist

ARTIST ARND Drossel from Germany has walked over 1,000 miles in a wire globe to raise awareness about climate change—now he’s heading to Glasgow.

“Years ago I realised that I needed to do more to fight the climate crisis” Arnd told Socialist Worker.

“Where I live millions of trees are dying, and there were floods that killed almost 200 people in Germany this year.”

“I’ve walked through some of the towns that were destroyed and many houses were broken away.

“Everywhere, I talk to people and feel connected to them. They have the same worries in Germany,

England and Ireland about the climate.

“And of course I might get some funny looks but you have to do something.”

“In two weeks I’ll be in Glasgow for Cop26 after taking the ferry from Belfast.

“The conference is, I think, one of the most important events.”

“I’m looking forward to talking to people from all over the world about the project and being part of the protests.

“People might be scared about the climate crisis but the hope that we can do something is like nothing else.”

‘The people destroying the planet are also putting up borders’

Pinar aksu Anti-racist activist

PINAR AKSU is an anti-racist campaigner in Glasgow who is part of organising an anti-racism bloc on the mobilisations on 6 November. She told Socialist Worker that anti-racism must be an essential part of the protests.

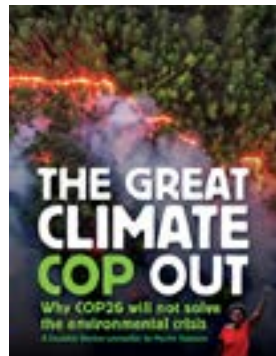
“Those in the Global South are already suffering the impact of climate change, and it will only get worse if we do not act,” she said.

“We are already seeing that climate change is causing huge loss of land due to rising sea levels, and parts of the world are becoming uninhabitable. The crisis is creating millions of climate refugees.”

Pinar added that anti-racists should rage against the racist policies of the world leaders attending the conference.

“The same world leaders inside the conference that are destroying the planet are also putting up border walls that cause the death of so many migrants.

“Interlinking every struggle will be important, and we need to loudly say there will be no climate justice without social justice.”



New from Socialist Worker

The Great Climate Cop Out—why Cop26 will not solve the environmental crisis
by Martin Empson

Available for £2 from all Socialist Worker sellers and from our circulation department
●Phone 020 7840 5601
●Email swcirc@swp.org.uk

You can also read it online at bit.ly/39XqX1U

‘Join up strikes and protests’

Stuart Glasgow Trades Council

STUART FROM Glasgow Trades Council says that as soon as world leaders enter the city, they will be confronted with banners of resistance.

“On the first day of Cop26 we are organising a banner welcome and asking people from across the country to either take photos or physically bring their union banners,” he told Socialist Worker.

“We’ve had to think creatively about how we get the word out to people across the city.

“We’ve also had to argue that more trade unions get involved.”

Movement Assemblies will be a place where activists can decide where next for the protests. Stuart said this is important.

“We need to react to what’s going on inside the conference,” he said.

“We need to be able to adapt what we do and be able to gauge the mood of both activists and the public.”

Along with protests, a wave of industrial action at the time of Cop26 is set to go ahead.

Scotrail workers in the RMT union have organised strikes from 1-12 November for pay justice and equality.

Up to a thousand Glasgow city council workers—cleaners and school cooks and janitors, in the GMB union have called strikes throughout Cop26. They could be

joined by up to 800 Unite union members the following week, who have already pledged that they will not cross GMB picket lines.

Stuart said mobilisations at Cop26 must link up with strikes. He said, “We are encouraging trade unionists to join the picket lines, but also for activists to take climate banners down to make links.”

Transformation

For Stuart arguments about a “just transition” for workers—protecting and creating new jobs away from polluting industries—will be essential at the Cop26 mobilisations.

“I think we have to go even further than talking about a just transition, we need a just transformation now,” he said.

“There’s this idea that the oil and gas industry is the only thing that needs to change, but we must go further. We need reskilling across many different industries now.

“The government has put very little effort into jobs. All this stagnation is happening because leaders are wilfully blind.

“They will sit in their conference and then do nothing.”

“These protests need to be as big as possible, and strikes are important too, to embarrass the government.

“We need to be seen.”

Workers’ power can beat system

Ruby Hirsch Socialist Workers Party activist



Socialist activist Ruby Hirsch

SOCIALISTS WANT to take the protests at Cop26 to their most radical conclusions.

Ruby Hirsch has been part of organising mobilisations. She told Socialist Worker that socialist demands and arguments have to be inserted into everything that goes on at Cop.

“We’re going to meet so many people that agree with us that Cop26 won’t do anything. Our input is to say we need system change not climate change.

“Not only that, we can offer a strategy about how we get there. We need to say that workers have the power to change the system.”

“The potential of the school strikes in 2019 was massive. A climate strike that involves workers has the potential to grind the system that is destroying the planet to a halt.”

Ruby pointed to what makes socialists different from the NGOs and pressure groups present at the protests.

“We aren’t protesting to lobby those inside the conference. Instead, we focus on the struggles from below.

“And it’s also vital that we link different struggles together.

Mobilisation should not just be about single issues. The same exploitative system has led to racism and Tory cuts.”

Glasgow has had a tidy up ahead of the conference. But as Ruby says, it’s all just for show.

“The council has employed workers to fill in potholes and paint railings that haven’t been done for years.”

“They’re trying to create a clean image while cutting services and closing down leisure spaces for people.

Libraries and youth services have been closed down, and all but one of the glasshouses and botanical gardens have been shut or left in disrepair.

“The council workers’ strikes show just how bad these cuts have got. I hope the strikes embarrass and shame Glasgow City Council.”

One of the most important arguments that socialists should take to Cop26 is that ordinary people should get a say in how things are run

Democracy

“Talking about what real democracy could look like will be important at the protests” said Ruby.

“Up to 90 percent of delegates to the conference will be representatives of corporations—how is that democratic?”

“Ordinary people will be left out of decision making, and we need to say workers can have a real say in the way their lives are run.

Those who work in the oil and gas industry probably want to do jobs that benefit people.

“Taking these ideas to the picket lines is vital. We are prepared to make these links even if union bureaucrats won’t.”

Strikes will be one part of the disruption at Cop26, but socialists must organise and take part in direct action at every opportunity.

We want an end to fossil fuel capitalism. Only then can we avert the climate crisis.

Join marches on Sat 6 Nov **Glasgow** 12 noon Kelvingrove Park. **London** 12 noon, Bank of England. Other cities at **cop26coalition.org**

Clubs must take spiking seriously

IN THE last few weeks, women have been sharing stories of being spiked by men in nightclubs and bars.

Terrifyingly, some say they believe they were injected with unknown mixtures of drugs.

Recently my friend was spiked in a nightclub in Plymouth. She reported feeling ill and so an ambulance was called.

Tests were run, and it was found that the drugs she was spiked with had taken a toll on her heart.

I was also spiked in a nightclub. Thankfully my friend noticed and told me not to drink from my glass.

When I took my glass to the bar, I told the bar worker that I had been spiked. Of course she was sympathetic but didn't ask me who had done it. I don't blame them for this, but I think this is where change could happen.

Women shouldn't have to feel as if avoiding spiking is just another part of going out.

In Plymouth and other cities, women have organised to boycott nightclubs this Wednesday.

Of course there has been some criticism of the boycott plan. I think it would hit clubs harder if it were on the weekend.

The murders of Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa were a wake-up call for so many women. But the protests—especially after Sarah's murder—made us feel empowered.

So join the boycott and keep fighting to put an end to this sexist system.

Emily Squire
Plymouth

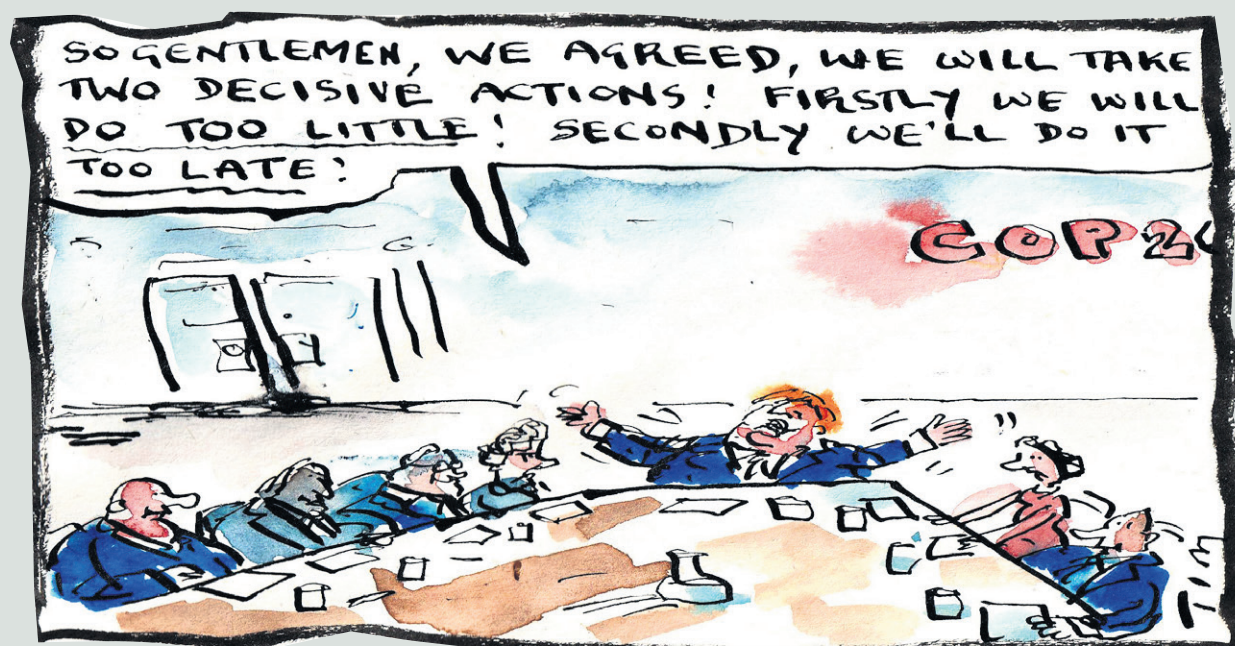


ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Tories' £20 a week cut means that a woman risks her safety

AS CHANCELLOR Rishi Sunak was considering his budget I was dealing with a case that should bring home the poverty the Tories should be addressing.

I work in a foodbank in Hackney, east London. We are only too aware of the human cost of the austerity policies of the last decade. But this winter is going to be terrifying.

A woman who has been coming regularly to the foodbank told me that she is very reluctantly staying with her partner, who is sometimes violent.

She could not see any way to survive with her young children without his income.

The Universal Credit cut has hit her hard. The £20 a week extra meant she was able to just about able to cook a meal in the evening

for her two children. Now that money will have to come from somewhere else, probably from the woman herself skipping meals.

Then there's the rising fuel bills—and remember that people on the prepaid tariffs foisted on the poorest face a bigger rise than the rest of us.

If she leaves her partner, her carefully-managed strategy of survival will fall apart.

So she risks her health and her mental equilibrium in order to meet her basic material needs and those of her children.

That £20 a week cut means nothing to that Tory MP who said it was grim to live on just £82,000 a year.

It means nothing to Boris Johnson who says that he can't get

by on his £157,000 a year—plus all the expenses and the corporate handouts.

But it's the biggest overnight cut to social security since 1945

The case I've mentioned is just one of tens of thousands that could be collected across Britain.

The answer isn't more charity, or more foodbanks—horribly necessary and admirable though they are.

It is to put more money in people's pockets, including higher wages as well as proper benefits.

I despair that the good lessons we learnt during the pandemic about working together and cherishing low paid workers are being forgotten.

Sandra J
East London

Just a thought...

Taiwan has right to decide

SOCIALIST Worker's article on Taiwan (20 October) ends with the sentence "While Taiwan is clearly part of China, in truth the decision over its future currently rests with the interplay of imperialist powers."

This is mainly true, but it totally ignores the role of the Taiwanese working class who fought successfully to overthrow the dictatorship of the Kuomintang.

If the people of Taiwan wish to remain independent of the oppressive Chinese state then socialists must support them without lining up with the West.

Taiwan may be "Chinese" in a cultural sense, but the local population have a right to self-determination.

Giles Ungpakorn
Aberdeen

Stamp out injustice

THE miscarriages of Justice UK (MOJUK) group sends out on average 200 + mailings a month to prisoners.

It costs 66p for each mail sent. We are asking MOJUK supporters to help so that we can keep the information going to prisoners.

If you have any unused stamps, please send them to MOJUK.

Even if you have only three stamps put two in an envelope, the other on the envelope, and send to MOJUK, c/o 22 Berners Street, Birmingham B19 2DR.

John O
Birmingham

Pitch rivals unite to score anti-racist winner

ANTI-RACIST Swansea and Cardiff football fans both celebrated a victory in the South Wales derby last weekend.

Players and managers of clubs read out a statement written by Stand Up To Racism members.

Our logos were displayed throughout the game on the big screen and in the programme, and players wore Show Racism the Red Card T-shirts.

This success followed years of campaigning, notably in Swansea by Jacks Against Racism and Fascism. We have managed

to marginalise the far right at our ground.

The "Voice of Wales" group had once abused players taking the knee—and targeted refugees at the Penally camp.

But our persistent campaigning helped ensure that #TakeTheKnee is now widely applauded from all sides of the ground.

And, it also helped ensure that the Voice of Wales received a pathetic vote in recent Senedd Welsh parliament elections.

Richard
Jacks Against Racism and Fascism.

NHS pay rise? I've ended up with less

I THOUGHT the 3 percent pay "rise" imposed for NHS workers was terrible, a pay cut in real terms.

And then I discovered I actually had less money coming in.

That's less in actual cash terms.

The extra 3 percent meant that I moved into the next level of pension contribution.

I am now above the £21,478 threshold for an increased pension contribution rate.

This means that the amount taken from my wages goes up from 5.6 percent to 7.1 percent. It hits workers including



Fight for better pay

clinical support workers and pharmacy assistants.

In my latest pay packet I was given an extra £348 in back pay.

But I also paid increased pension, national insurance and

tax contributions of £361. So I was £13 worse off.

And this comes before the national insurance goes up by 1.25 percent in February, and the Universal Credit cuts bite.

The demand for a 15 percent pay rise for all NHS workers is now more relevant than ever.

I hope when the unions have finished their consultations and ballots that all of us NHS workers will show what we think of the government's insults.

And if we take some action then everyone must support us.

Name and address supplied

Miliband and China's coal

CAN Labour's Ed Miliband sink any lower? We all remember his 2015 general election slogan proudly displayed on a mug, "Controls on Immigration".

Recently, and before it has even begun, he blamed China for the Cop 26 talks ending in failure due to China's coal production.

Apart from lining up behind British and US imperialism, blaming China has a whiff of racism about it. Perhaps Miliband could knock out another mug with the slogan "Controls on Chinese Coal".

John Curtis
Ipswich

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602

Socialist Workers Party online meetings



The Socialist Workers Party continues to hold mostly online meetings during the pandemic. This ensures that there can still be collective and safe discussion, organising and actions. Occasionally branches will hold in-person meetings with precautions taken as far as possible for a safe environment.

Most of the meetings will be held using the Zoom system. Download the Zoom app onto your phone or computer and just before the time given for your local meeting ask to "Join a meeting".

You can then enter the number printed on this page for the appropriate meeting. **The password for all meetings is 967537.**

Make sure you look at the SWP Facebook page facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty for news of national online meetings and other updates.

The bill will criminalise people who attempt to cross the Channel

Stop the Nationality and Borders Bill

The case against immigration controls

LONDON: HACKNEY

Thu 4 Nov, 7.30pm
854-8245-8715
Old School Rooms,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Road,
E5 0PU

PORTSMOUTH

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
488-934-2809

SWANSEA & WEST WALES

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
902-964-963

BIRMINGHAM

Why we hate Mondays—Marxism and alienation

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
281-634-5938

BOURNEMOUTH

As Starmer puts the boot in—socialists and the Labour party

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
857-8029-9769

BRADFORD

Why does the free market fail?

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
885-9187-7552

BRIGHTON & HOVE

Marxism, gender and trans liberation

Thu 4 Nov,
6.30pm
874-3262-3749

BRISTOL

The right's 'war on woke'—their free speech and ours

Thu 4 Nov, 7.30pm
Kuumba Centre
20 Hepburn Road
BS2 8UD

CAMBRIDGE

After Sarah Everard—the police, violence, sexism and the state

Thu 4 Nov, 7.30pm
681-800-4408

CARDIFF

After the Unite union elections—how can we rebuild our unions?

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
630-181-4857

CHESTERFIELD

After Texas—what now for abortion rights?

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
828-532-8731

COVENTRY

Climate change, refugees and migration

Wed 3 Nov,
7.30pm
823-945-1917

DEVON & CORNWALL

Climate catastrophe—why nuclear is not the answer

Thu 4 Nov,
7.30pm
865-2972-2883

DUNDEE, ABERDEEN & PERTH

After Texas—what now for abortion rights?

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
894-2628-7708

EDINBURGH

After Texas—what now for abortion rights?

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
431-459-112

GLASGOW

International panel: Global South and Global North—how do we get climate justice?

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
Avant Garde, 33-44 King St
Merchant City, G1 5QT

HARLOW

Anger to revolution—what makes people rise up?

Thu 11 Nov, 7.30pm
832-8746-7480

HASTINGS

Another education is possible

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
880-5464-3685
The White Rock Hotel
1-10 White Rock, TN34 1JU

HUDDERSFIELD

The world turned upside down—the English Revolution

Wed 3 Nov, 6.30pm
290-168-1804

KENT

After Texas—what now for abortion rights?

Thu 4 Nov, 8.15pm
434-623-8064

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE

Climate change, anti-racism and refugees

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
992-204-9372

LIVERPOOL

Food shortages and petrol queues—what's gone wrong with the economy?

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
493-925-5919

LONDON: HARINGEY

After Sarah Everard—the police, violence, sexism and the state

Wed 3 Nov,
7.30pm
459-388-1576

LONDON: ISLINGTON

The bloody history of the British Empire

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
874-012-7970

LONDON: NEWHAM

A rebel's guide to Rosa Luxemburg

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
288-098-8827

LONDON: SOUTH EAST

Booklaunch: Rebellious Daughters of History

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
529-913-6390

With author Judy Cox

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Booklaunch: Mindshift—how culture transformed the human brain

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
818-391-0420

With author John Parrington

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

The revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx

Wed 3 Nov, 7.30pm
543-023-057

LONDON: WEST AND NORTHWEST

The right's 'war on woke'—their free speech and ours

Thu 4 Nov, 7.30pm
878-5774-8899

MANCHESTER

Alt right to far right—is the fascist threat back?

Wed 3 Nov, 7.15pm
323-178-7151

NEWCASTLE

People, parliament and power—is this democracy?

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
368-595-2712

NORWICH

People, parliament and power—is this democracy?

Wed 3 Nov,
7.30pm
906-652-5299

OXFORD & THAMES VALLEY

Neurodiversity, disability and capitalism

Wed 3 Nov, 7pm
861-2001-6477

SHEFFIELD & SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Trans rights now—Marxism, gender and liberation

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
528-174-9278

TELFORD

Trans rights now—Marxism, gender and liberation

Thu 4 Nov,
7.30pm
791-7178-2356

WIGAN

Why you should be a socialist

Thu 4 Nov, 7pm
The Swan & Railway
80 Wallgate
WN1 1BA

WOLVERHAMPTON & WALSALL

War and occupation—the bloody role of Western imperialism

Wed 3 Nov,
7.30pm
913-6646-7067

YORK & SCARBOROUGH

After Sarah Everard—the police, violence, sexism and the state

Wed 3 Nov,
7pm
827-489-7492

BOOKMARKS the socialist bookshop



The Labour Party—a Marxist History

by Tony Cliff, Donny Gluckstein and Charlie Kimber, £14.99

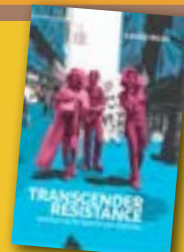


Breaking Up the British State—Scotland, Independence and Socialism £12



Does privilege explain racism?

by Esme Choonara, Ken Olende, Yuri Prasad and Weyman Bennett, £3



Transgender Resistance

by Laura Miles
£10

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Workers are demanding improved menopause policy

Women often feel alone and ignored in their workplaces but now some trade unions are fighting back. Isabel Ringrose talks to workers about what could be done

FOR MANY women, menopause is an inevitability. But so, it seems, is being ignored, made to feel shame, misdiagnosed, given the wrong medication and restricted from access to help.

Some 80 percent of women experience changes during menopause.

Hot flushes, headaches, insomnia, poor concentration, loss of memory, urinary problems, hair loss, heavy bleeding, vaginal discomfort, depression, anxiety and mood swings are just some of the symptoms.

In the workplace, around 4.3 million women are menopausal. Nine in ten women feel the menopause has a negative impact on their working life.

Women are embarrassed and bullied, with nearly 900,000 women having been pushed out of their workplaces.

Trade unions are now fighting for more awareness and recognition. The TUC union federation released a toolkit aimed at union officers and reps to better support members affected by menopause.

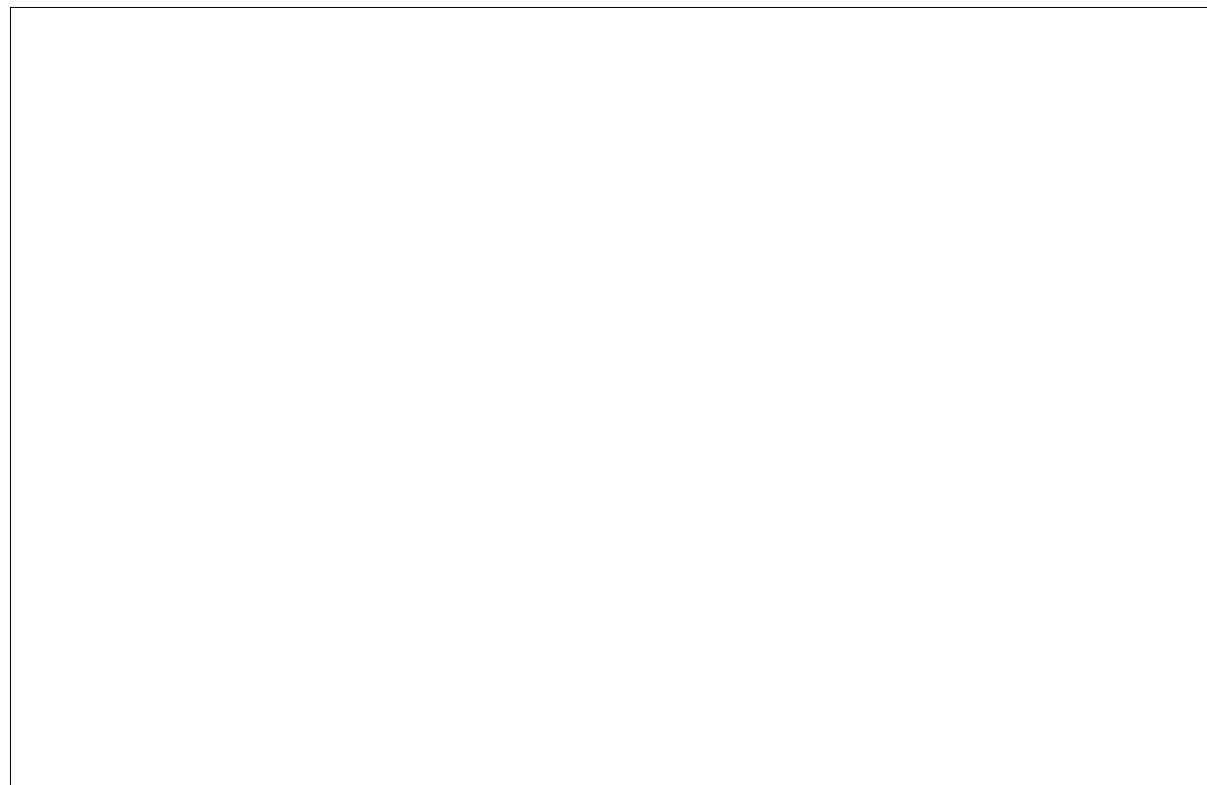
GMB, Unison and the NEU are some of the trade unions battling for women's health equality. Information guides are produced for workers and training is encouraged for reps.

Allison is a public sector worker and PCS union activist. She was once approached by a union member going through menopause who was struggling with memory and focusing on detailed work.

"She had a manager making life very difficult, she was being micro-managed," Allison told Socialist Worker. "We said she was being bullied, it's completely inappropriate. One of us became her rep and we tackled it like that."

Allison explained that the line manager in question was female.

"Some women managers have to prove they're as good as male



A PROMOTIONAL image from the TUC's menopause campaign

managers by being as unreasonable and sexist as any man. It's the unpleasant aspect of management," she explained.

But at Allison's workplace last week union pressure won proper guidance for line managers. "We also had a workplace menopause meeting, and have another next week," she said.

Often workers are told to mould themselves to fit the needs of their workplace. Fighting for more menopause recognition ensures workers are accommodated, rather than being forced to accommodate to the bosses.

Sally Kincaid is the joint district secretary of the NEU in Wakefield.

She told Socialist Worker that three years ago women in their late 40s and early 50s were being bullied at school by management.

One woman in particular met with the union and management to fight for a support plan to be put in place.

"Things are definitely starting to change," Sally explained. "After that meeting posters were being put up."

"If women were honest about not sleeping at night, there wasn't always the right response. Now menopause is beginning to be an acceptable reason to have time off."

Sally thinks that the lack of awareness comes from the system.

"Under capitalism older women are put on the shelf," she said.

"Menopause is temporary, but sexism and ageism definitely play a role. Women are seen as no longer useful in terms of producing the next generation of workers."

Allison said that menopause is still not properly treated by the NHS. "Why isn't there more funding and recognition?" she asked.

"It's a symptom of women's oppression. Women lose jobs for being women, because they have children or go through menopause and months of symptoms."

Some names have been changed

Openness and action are needed now

SALLY says there needs to be more "understanding, discussion and open dialogue" about menopause. "This discussion has to include lots of people," she said.

"When you win things like fans at work or whatever helps, it makes others feel like they can win things."

Allison said, "We need to actually be making sure unions have national policy, training for reps and information, such as fact sheets to give people the confidence to raise issues."

"It should be part of our normal union

Medicine isn't right for all

work. It'd be great if people put on events with information sheets to read and links that people can access."

Sally added that conversation about the menopause has to be "wider" to prevent further problems, such as drugs being pushed on women when this isn't the appropriate solution.

"Much of what women go through during menopause is internalised—if you Google the symptoms, you're told it's either long Covid or the menopause," she said.

"Being given a hormone patch isn't enough. Why has there not been more research? This could have a positive effect and ask what more can be done to help, rather than drug companies making profits."

The demand that workers can make in regards to menopause can be part of a wider struggle for better workplace conditions for women.

Menopause has always been a class and union issue

ALLISON thinks unions are now taking up issues around menopause because of the #MeToo movement.

"The anger at the level of sexism, harassment, misogyny and structural oppression women face has angered women—and men," she explained.

"When a movement really ploughs up society, like Black Lives Matter and the vigils for Sarah Everard, it feeds into

anger around what's happened to other women.

"It makes things easier to discuss, and people feel angrier and more confident."

"Problems such as sexism, austerity and Covid are thrown back onto the family—particularly onto women and working class families," Allison added.

"I think that's why men are angry too—it's not just men versus women. Male colleagues can be our

allies around menopause.

"There has to be a higher level of anger and determination to say we're not going to put up with this. We're not going to be bullied because we're female."

Sally added that experiences such as menopause "always hit the poorest hardest".

"Rich women going through menopause can afford to go to a foreign country to relax, or go

shopping—the poor have to fight their way through.

Sally explained how experiences affect working women differently, showing that women across society aren't all in it together.

"Working women stay up with their baby all night and then go to work the next day," she explained. "Things women go through are continually individualised."

"If you're going through

menopause and haven't slept, a fellow worker and trade unionist should be asking 'what can we do?' It's a trade union issue."

Allison agrees. She said taking on equality "makes us all better trade unionists and colleagues."

"The chances that menopause is not touching your life is very remote. It's definitely a class issue—we have to tackle these things collectively."

The strange spectacle of the US far right at large

New footage reveals some of what went on when Donald Trump supporters stormed the US capitol. It's a glimpse into the world of the far right, says **Richard Donnelly**

FOUR HOURS at the Capitol brings astonishing footage from January's so-called insurrection at the United States Capitol building onto British television screens for the first time.

This hour by hour account stitches together security videos, police shoulder cam footage and far right livestreams. The patchwork of the US far right is illuminated in all its confused eccentricity and nauseating reaction.

Of course, there are the hardened militiamen who arrive in tactical gear and paramilitary uniforms, armed with pepper spray, hog ties, knives and guns. But there's also the wacked out hippies of the so-called cosmic right—new agers who worship Trump as the “God Emperor”.

Between these are all the varieties of the far right in the US today—Proud Boys, QAnon believers, Maga activists, “Cowboys for Trump” and more.

Video filmed by the rioters inside the Congress captures the euphoria of these little worms. They feel themselves bound together into a great dragon, breathing fire onto the establishment politicians trapped in saferooms beneath the building.

One talks of his quasi-religious crusade to “save the children” from Satanist senators. He savoured the moment he and other armed men swept the building.

It was literally intoxicating. “I looked into my fanny pack and took out seven pre-rolled joints to pass around,” he said.

Farce is never far away, but there are also moments that crystallise the deep contradictions of fascist ideology. One scene shows one of the “insurgents” laying on the floor bleeding after being shot in the face by police.

Sacred

A cop reminds him that “this is the most sacred building”. The fascist responds with a recognition of the importance of Congress, the Constitution and the Stars and Stripes.

It's as though he is apologising for bleeding onto the hallowed carpets.

In many ways this documentary is spectacle at its worst. Yes, there is fascinating footage, but there is almost no context.

The story of how it arose as a challenge to the millions-strong Black Lives Matter movement and the huge uprisings against Trump in 2020 is simply ignored. Centrist politicians and the police pose as a thin blue line between democracy and fascism.

But there are insightful moments that make it a worthwhile watch.

Four Hours at the Capitol is available now on BBC iPlayer



HOGARTH CELEBRATED and satirised Britain as a developing capitalist state. The March of the Guards to Finchley shows the British army marching against a reactionary Jacobite rebellion PICTURE: FOUNDLING MUSEUM

The art of early capitalism in Europe

EXHIBITION

HOGARTH AND EUROPE

3 November 2021—20 March 2022 at Tate Britain, central London

EUROPEAN SOCIETY and culture changed dramatically in the mid-18th century as capitalism developed.

For the growing capitalist class, it was an age of opportunity and change, enlightenment and innovation.

But already, it contained the seeds of modern empire, revolution and global war.

In Britain, William Hogarth became famous for paintings and prints that captured all this—he celebrated and satirised it.

He wasn't the only one. Across Europe, artists were creating vivid images of contemporary life and social commentary.

The rich and the poor, the

immoral and self-deluding, the selfish and the selfless, were made characters in pictorial stories that caught people's imaginations and took art in novel directions.

This exhibition brings together Hogarth's works with those of other artists across Europe.

It includes Francesco Guardi in Venice, Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin in Paris and Cornelis Troost in Amsterdam.

FILM

WARNING

Available to stream now on Apple TV

AN ASTRONAUT called Dave spins adrift in space, contemplating the meaning of life, watching the Earth he's already lost contact with fall away beneath him.

On Earth down below, a disparate and interconnected collection of characters are also adrift searching for meaning and connection.

Warning is a sci-fi set in the very near future, allowing for some fairly on the nose satire.

We're three new coronaviruses in, while the planet struggles with apparently dangerous and frequent electronic storms.

Lockdowns, border closures, riots, electricity outages and devastating thunderstorms are reported on the radio as if it's the weather forecast.

There are some familiar themes, and some Black Mirror style fretting



Claire depends on a 'God' device

about the function of new technologies to distort lives and relationships.

One character, Claire, has put her life and wellbeing in the hands of an Alexa-type machine called God.

It wakes her up with her “daily inspirational quote” and tells her off for listening to music “not conducive to spiritual growth” before changing it without asking.

It counts her sins and issues paternal guidance on morality. At ten sins a month, it starts to charge her. She depends on it.

Other parts are more reminiscent of films and TV shows such as Bladerunner or Westworld—can you have a meaningful connection with a machine?

An android desperately wants to be liked despite his crude mannerisms and affectations. He tries to talk to a potential buyer who speaks rudely about him as if he wasn't there.

There's maybe not a clear point to the film—but then, maybe there's not supposed to be. It's a collection of vague anxieties about the state of the world, and that seems fitting enough.

Nick Clark

Powerful play navigates debates in anti-racism

TELEVISION

EAR FOR EYE

Available now on BBC iPlayer

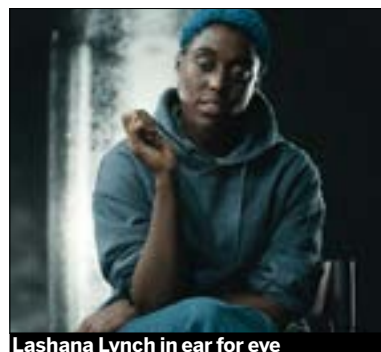
EAR FOR eye follows British and American black characters navigating their way through today's society from front rooms to kitchens, to campuses and the streets.

This play adapted for screen mixes music, beats, dialogue and visuals to explore debates and

questions such as demonstrations vs direct action, violence vs non-violence, and personal racism vs structural oppression.

It features a series of sketches—monologues, conversations and arguments. In one, a young black man argues with his father, a civil rights activist, over the slow pace of change.

In the final part, white people read out historical segregation laws and the racist slave codes that preceded them.



Lashana Lynch in ear for eye

IT IS incredibly common to find outrage in the mainstream news that brands movements and campaigns such as Black Lives Matter (BLM) and environmental protesters as “selfish” and “immoral”.

Good Morning Britain host Richard Madeley described the climate group Insulate Britain’s actions as “disgusting.”

Refugees and working class families are divided between the deserving and undeserving, with the latter branded as scroungers.

But is it moral for our rulers to remain idle as catastrophic climate change endangers billions of people, particularly in the Global South? Or avoid tax and hand over contracts to their billionaire friends?

Soon after the British invasion of Afghanistan 20 years ago, then prime minister Tony Blair attempted to justify his bombing campaign as the “moral” thing to do.

He falsely branded his campaign as one that would liberate women and children from militant Islamists.

Anti-war campaigners and socialists argued that the invasion and subsequent murder of hundreds of thousands of people was completely immoral.

What’s moral and what’s not depends on which side of the class war you are on.

Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky addressed the question in his pamphlet, *Their Morals and Ours*.

He argued that morals and ethics vary due to the different interests and material conditions of socio-economic classes.

The ruling class tries to impose its concept of morality onto the working class as a way of curbing and exploiting them, and restricting forms of resistance.

The people at the top of society make a vast effort through the education system, the media and some religious ideas to drive home an image of a “good citizen”.

THEY ARE part of a “hard working family”—a term loved by politicians—and are ceaselessly engaged in an effort to better themselves in material terms and to consume. They compete from an early age for exam success and then a “career path”.

And they don’t make trouble. All of this fits with producing fuel for the profit machine.

The ruling class’s version of morality allows it to excuse imperialist rivalries, interventions and wars.

Trotsky argued that capitalism could never survive without the foundation of abstract morality. Morality allows capitalists to attack the actions of a movement to undermine and distract from their end goal, and reflects the ruling class’ interests.

BLACK LIVES Matter protesters across the world were accused of being violent, while they were met with brutal force by the cops

WHAT IS MORALITY?

Our rulers set a moral code for us to live by, while living by a different set of rules themselves. Sam Ord explores what morality means for working class people

In 2020 the explosion of the BLM movement onto the streets addressed structural racism within the police and society as a whole.

Right wing politicians and newspapers condemned the “immoral actions” of a few protesters who looted and damaged property.

But in turn, the ruling class and right wing “moralists” defended a system of brutality and racism that allows black people to die at the hands of police at a disproportionate rate. They ignore that their system is built on the looting and colonisation of countries across the world.

Trotsky said, “A slave-owner

who through cunning and violence shackles a slave in chains, and a slave who through cunning or violence breaks the chains—let not the contemptible eunuchs tell us that they are equals before a court of morality!”

He was arguing that true morality will be represented by the working class and will defend the interests of humanity.

The issue of when violence is justified sums up much of the class nature of morality. Politicians of all stripes venerate the military, awash with the latest technology of mass murder.

British and US forces exterminated a million people in Iraq

and devastated the country. But that’s officially sanctioned and justified.

Every day nuclear weapons threaten the annihilation of humanity—they are part of a “defence” programme that most mainstream parties in Britain support.

But then the ruling class hoards the monopoly of violence for its state forces. It says that anyone else who uses violence against property or people is a thug or a terrorist.

STATE violence maintains and protects a system of exploitation, sexism and racism. It shields a world where the rich thrive and tens of thousands of the poor die every day from poverty.

Defeating that violent system sometimes requires violence. Slavery wasn’t ended just by the mass abolition movements, important though they were.

It crucially took a series of very violent rebellions by slaves themselves, such as the Haitian revolt that broke the slavers. And in the US slavery came to an end after a bloody civil war.

There are similar examples from the battles against British colonialism, the fight for women’s votes or the struggle to break apartheid in South Africa.

In all these cases violence was never the single or even the dominant method of struggle. But it was part of the resistance.

Today, faced with the horror of the multi-headed climate crisis, is it really immoral to attack the oil and gas pipelines that are integral to the fossil fuel economy?

The protesters at Standing Rock in Dakota, US, used every peaceful means open to them and raised awareness of the issues they faced.

They were met with attack dogs, water cannon, mass arrests and tear gas—and the pipeline still operates today.

Palestinians have the right to fight with guns in their hands against the violence and oppression of the Israeli state.

And to defeat a system headed by people who will stop at nothing to defend it will eventually require an insurrection that will involve a measure of violence.

This isn’t to wallow in violence as a method or to always see it as a correct tactic. Mass movements are essential.

Revolutionary Malcolm X and other black liberation fighters subscribed to this idea by fighting for liberation and justice “by any means necessary”.

But Trotsky explained, “A means can be justified only by its end. But the end in its turn needs to be justified.”

It’s a two-way relationship with the end result equally shaping the means.” Socialists want a world that gives power to the vast majority in society, for them to decide democratically how to use the resources they have.

Achieving that means ordinary

Leon Trotsky

“Right wing ‘moralists’ defend a system of brutality and racism

people taking part in their own liberation. As Karl Marx put it, “The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves”. Methods that divert away from that aim are not going to lead to the desired end of working class freedom.

This end is only possible if working class people learn about their potential strength in class unity, as well as about how to fight, the need to combat oppression, who their allies are and who their enemies are.

That’s only possible on a mass scale though struggle.

The bomber, the “left” MP and the military of some supposedly progressive government all say they will substitute themselves for the actions of working class people.

They cut people off from the crucial understandings that emerge in strikes, occupations and mass demonstrations.

TROTSKY argued that during class struggle only those means used that united the mass of workers should be used. These would “fill their hearts with irreconcilable hostility to oppression”.

He said, “Not all means are permissible”. For example, to fight for working class emancipation we can’t use means or tactics that breed more oppression.

The ultimate working class morality is to use the means that strengthen the possibility of the collective overthrow of capitalism.

Trotsky wrote, “The moralist continues to insist, ‘does it mean that in the class struggle against capitalists all means are permissible, lying, frame-up, betrayal, murder, and so on?’”

“Are the given means really capable of leading to the goal?” Trotsky replies.

“In relation to individual terror, both theory and experience bear witness that such is not the case.

“To the terrorist we say, it is impossible to replace the masses, only in the mass movement can you find expedient expression for your heroism.

“However, under conditions of civil war, the assassination of individual oppressors ceases to be an act of individual terror. If we shall say, a revolutionist bombed General Franco and his staff into the air, it would hardly



PICTURE: GUY SWALLMAN

PROTESTS AT the Standing Rock Reservation in Dakota, United States, against the polluting pipeline have been met with repression (top) Strikes, like the ongoing struggle by Royal Parks workers, help working people develop class unity (bottom)

evoke moral indignation.

“Thus, even in the sharpest question—murder of man by man—moral absolutes prove futile.”

Revolutionary socialists’ understanding of morality begins and ends with an understanding of the need to destroy capitalist society.

Capitalism is an inherently immoral system that relies on prejudice, violence, poverty, fossil fuels, imperialism and war.

It is the role of revolutionaries to break down ruling class arguments about what is and is not moral. Our understanding of moralism should be based on the immorality of capitalism and our fight for working class emancipation. Not on the contradictory morals our rulers seek to impose on us.

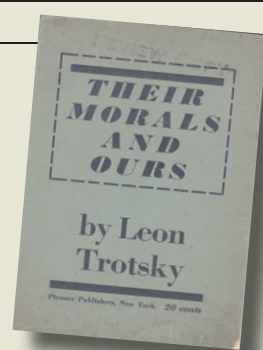
READ MORE

● **Their Morals and Ours**
by Leon Trotsky
£14.96 and at
bit.ly/LTonMorals

● **Non-violence, social change and revolution**
by Martin Empson in
International Socialism
Journal bit.ly/ISJ165

● **How to Blow Up a Pipeline**
by Andreas Malm
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1848 or go to www.bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



COMMENT

A state founded on lies has to keep its past hidden

Deep in Israeli vaults sits evidence of the atrocities that marked the state’s founding. Nick Clark explains why they are buried

FOR DECADES, Israel has kept documents describing its ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948 under wraps.

Under laws that limit the time documents can be kept secret, Israel’s reports of war crimes and massacres by its armed forces—and what happened to Palestinian refugees—should now be public.

If published, they would reveal more of the truth about what really went on when Israel was created that year.

But a little-known body—the Ministerial Committee on Access to Restricted Archival Material—has made sure they stay locked away.

Now, via a freedom of information request, Israeli research organisation Akevot has at least managed to get a list of which documents the committee keeps censored.

They include Israel’s official file on the notorious massacre at the Palestinian village Deir Yassin. In a planned operation, militias that went on to form Israel’s army entered the village and went house to house killing the people who lived there.

No one knows precisely how many Palestinians the militias killed, because the official file is secret—estimates say around 110.

But it came to symbolise the many massacres that Israeli forces committed to clear Palestinians from the land.

That’s why, in 2000, the committee decided not to declassify the file, because “The matter concerns the image and reputation of the State of Israel.”

Perhaps more revealing, is the decision to classify documents from Israel’s Ministry of Minority Affairs that “mention the expulsion of Arabs, the confiscation of Arab property and acts of cruelty committed against the population by soldiers.”

It was in response to a

request to publish these documents in the early 1980s that Israel’s then prime minister, Menachem Begin, formed the committee.

Begin himself had been a commander in the Irgun militia that carried out the Deir Yassin massacre.

Israel’s state archivist at the time said the government “vehemently opposed” publishing the documents.

Not only did they relate to “expulsion” but also “actions taken by local commanders, sometimes very important commanders, prominent in our political sphere.”

Relations

So the committee decided the documents would stay sealed “because of national security and foreign relations concerns.”

Other files kept under wraps include a report on war crimes by Israeli soldiers during operations in late 1948. These include, in the words of the state archivist, “not just a description of the horrific events, as made familiar in other documents, but also the names of witnesses.”

A government report on why Palestinian refugees fled also remains censored. So does the Riftin Report on Israeli soldiers’ war crimes, and 39 pages of government minutes.

All in all, Akevot says the committee’s main focus is on “hiding war crimes and other incidents from 1948-49.”

In this, Akevot says, the committee is simply following a long standing tradition in the Israeli state of covering up what really went on in 1948. The organisation even got the state to release a document of “topics” on which documents

must stay censored.

These include materials relating to the “expulsion of Arabs” as well as anything that might “damage the reputation of the Israeli army as an occupying force without moral principles.”

The list is supposedly no longer in use but, says Akevot, the fact that files stay under wraps shows Israel still follows its guidance.

Israel does this not only to protect the reputation of its army, but to impede discussion about “the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”

That “official state narrative” denies Israel expelled Palestinians in 1948—and that the Palestinians today have a right to return.

Its own documents tell the truth. Israel was built on racist, violent foundations—that’s why it’s remains a racist, violent state today.

Other files kept hidden include a report on war crimes by Israeli soldiers

Anti-Covid tablet is a bitter pill for the poor

by YURI PRASAD

NEW DRUGS with the potential to cut Covid hospitalisations and save many thousands of lives are about to hit the global market.

These latest antivirals come as pills rather than injections, meaning they are easy to distribute and can be taken at home.

The treatments been shown to reduce the chances of the most vulnerable people getting severe Covid symptoms. And they can stop some people from contracting the illness altogether.

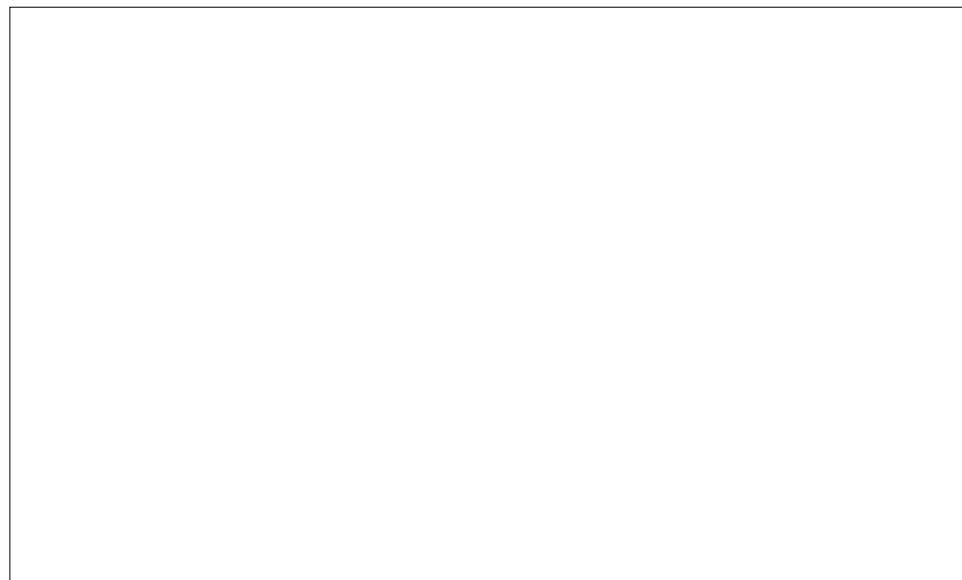
This should be news the whole world can celebrate.

Richest

But, as with the vaccine programme, it appears the new antivirals will only be widely available in the richest countries.

Big Pharma giant Merck is ahead of the pack with its molnupiravir treatment. This is expected to gain approval in the US and Britain before the end of the year.

The firm is keen to suggest its pills will be available in even the poorest countries.



MERCK'S MOLNUPIRAVIR treatment is expected to be approved by the NHS soon.

Company bosses announced recently that they will allow generic manufacturers in India to sell the pills at a reduced price in more than 100 low income nations.

Most Sub-Saharan African countries, where vaccination rates are as low as 3 percent, are covered by the deal.

But this apparent act of generosity is nonsense—and

Merck knows it. Firstly, half of all covid infections in low and middle income nations in the first six months of this year occurred in 32 countries that are specifically excluded from Merck's deal.

That's because the firm wants middle income countries, including Brazil, Russia and Malaysia, to pay much closer to its full asking price

of £515 per pill. The Indian firms, by contrast, may charge £7 per pill.

Second, there's little value in having treatment unless a country first has an efficient testing system.

Few Sub-Saharan African countries, where government health spending per person can be as low as £25 a year, have a testing system

or money for antivirals. So why is Merck putting on this theatre show of benevolence?

The firm was associated with selling HIV medications in southern Africa at inflated prices—and suing the South African government for attempting to import cheaper treatments.

As the HIV/Aids pandemic ripped through Africa, Big Pharma was busy lining its pockets in ways most people found sickening.

Boycott

Merck's corporate reputation was torn to pieces by a global campaign that targeted its offices and called for a boycott.

Its bosses today don't want to repeat the past.

But they also fear if Big Pharma appears to be doing nothing to help the availability of new drugs, then governments may take matters into their own hands.

Their worst nightmare is governments starting to use "compulsory licencing".

With the pandemic as justification, countries could use emergency laws to override intellectual

property restrictions to allow the cheap manufacture of Covid medications. And, if the danger of the pandemic was a good enough reason to compulsory licence Covid treatments, why not a range of patented drugs?

Merck knows there's little or no money to be made in the poorest countries of the Global South, but there's a pot of gold in the West.

Bought

Already the US government has bought up at least 20 percent of Merck's entire production of molnupiravir this year.

The bill for 1.7 million doses came to a staggering £870 million. Australia, South Korea and New Zealand have all signed similar deals.

The NHS in Britain last week announced that it has bought a share too.

The great tragedy is, if an antiviral treatment was available globally, it could improve all of humanity's chances of escaping Covid.

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IN BRIEF

Logistics drivers ballot at Jaguar...

SOME 2,000 DHL logistics workers who deliver components at Jaguar Land Rover are being balloted for strikes after receiving no pay rise since 2018.

Strikes could hit sites in the Midlands and the north, such as Castle Bromwich, Halewood, Hams Hall, Midpoints Tyrefort and Solihull.

DHL offered 1.75 percent to cover two and a half years from 2020. Talks with bosses began last Wednesday.

The Unite union says DHL accepted about £95 million in furlough cash and makes global profits of £1.2 billion. The ballot closes on Monday 15 November.

..and at Mini, Oxford, too

WORKERS AT the Mini car factory in Oxford have voted to strike for six days over pay.

Large goods vehicles drivers employed by Imperial Logistics International (UK) voted by 94 percent to strike for 24 hours on 9 November and 17 November.

They are set to be followed by 48-hour strikes beginning on 23 and 30 November.

Bosses offered the Unite union members a pay rise that is £2 less than the hourly rate paid to those employed on an agency basis.

More than 70 drivers are needed for production, but the firm only has 15 with the rest of the work subcontracted out.

Put pay back at pole position

SCAFFOLDERS employed by Altrad at the Mitsubishi Chemicals plant in Billingham, Teesside, are set to strike in November and December.

Scaffolders' pay at the plant is £12.36 an hour, despite the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry rate of £17.45.

Around 25 Unite union members, including scaffolders, insulation and painters voted unanimously to strike. They are set to strike for 19 days between 4 November and 4 December

March for early years funding

OVER 200 people marched to Downing Street in central London last week to demand proper funding for maintained nursery schools.

Three more of these vital early years settings were lost at the end of the summer term.

Many more are now in deficit, and facing cuts, restructuring and a very precarious future.

Workers, unions, families, early years organisations and MPs all joined the march.

If we don't get the funding we urgently need, more action and solidarity will be essential.

Michaela Loebner

OUTSOURCING



OUTSIDE CHURCHILL'S headquarters

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

Churchill cleaners unite against bosses

by SAM ORD

RAIL AND Facebook cleaners employed by outsourcer Churchill united to fight for pay and justice outside the company's headquarters on Monday.

Dozens of workers from the RMT transport union and the Caiwu cleaners' union lined the entrance of Churchill's central London offices.

The rail workers are demanding a pay rise, travel expenses and sick pay.

Cleaning staff have been on the front line throughout the Covid pandemic, but most receive poverty wages.

Churchill has to meet the cleaners' demands for fair pay and improved conditions.

Jordan, a rail cleaner from Kent, told Socialist Worker that on top of low pay his colleagues face "travel expenses that cost a fortune".

"A lot of us are paying £200 a month on travel just to get to and from work," he said.

"The pandemic has been hard on our pay—I've only ever had one pay rise, and that was ages ago."

Rail cleaners employed by Churchill cover trains and stations for the Thameslink, Southern, Great Northern and Southeastern franchises.

As the Covid pandemic struck they were handed more work in dangerous situations but no extra staff were employed. Now Churchill plans to cut the number of cleaners on Southeastern trains.

Dividend

Churchill pays its cleaners the minimum wage and only statutory zero sick pay. Yet its bosses and directors took a £3.8 million dividend in 2020.

Churchill's cleaners at Facebook have also been fighting for better pay and conditions

Caiwu general secretary Alberto Durango told Socialist Worker why it was important to link up with the rail cleaners. "Churchill bosses

are allowed by the system to exploit outsourced workers," he said.

"This happens everywhere, across the country. A united working class is needed to win."

In a survey of Churchill's cleaners, 69 percent reported that they have gone into work while sick because they couldn't afford to stay home.

Phil, an RMT rep on the London Underground, said, "It is clear from the pandemic that cleaners are incredibly important workers."

"They were asked to do extra cleaning to keep people as safe as possible yet they're on minimum wage and get no sick pay."

"That means if cleaners get sick they can't afford to stay home. It endangers people with Covid."

"Churchill—who are hiding in this building—and the government have blood on their hands."

"All workers should get paid to isolate themselves."

CONSTRUCTION

Scunthorpe scaffolders need to break deadlock

STRIKING scaffolders at British Steel in Scunthorpe, South Yorkshire, have said they want to escalate action after 19 days of strikes over pay.

The strikers, who work for contractor Actavo, are fighting for rates of pay in line with the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry.

Unite union officials are in talks with Actavo management.

One worker expressed his anger at not having had a pay rise in over ten years.

He said they'd worked through the pandemic and got no acknowledgement from management for the risks involved.

Another worker said, "We have a march every Monday, but we need to march every day. We need to fight Actavo."

Workers said they are disappointed seeing other scaffolders from other



Scunthorpe pickets

companies crossing the picket line.

And they are disheartened to see other Unite union members do the same.

The workers were set to have an open meeting as Socialist Worker went to press to discuss next moves to put to Unite.

Trevor Jones

DEFENDING RIGHTS



SUPPORTERS OF jailed Wikileaks founder Julian Assange marched from the BBC headquarters to the high court on Saturday against his possible extradition to the US

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

UNITE UNION POLICY CONFERENCE

Debates point to coming first tests for new direction under Graham

THE UNITE union's policy conference took place last week in Liverpool with around 800 delegates physically attending while others opted to take part online.

The conference came just a few weeks after the election of Sharon Graham as Unite general secretary. Graham laid out a clear vision to delegates that took up the themes of her election campaign.

She stressed that the union's priority had to be to "create more power in the workplace" in the facing of a growing onslaught from the Tories and employers.

She briefly dismissed any reliance on the Labour Party to defend workers, saying "Labour is not stepping up to the plate".

At the centre of Graham's plan is the creation of "industrial combines". This involves bringing together workplace reps across each industrial sector to share experiences and develop strategies.

Graham also linked this approach to the fight for equality.

She suggested that black and ethnic minority reps, for example, in leading firms with large concentrations of such workers could be brought together.

They could then develop industrial bargaining plans that address inequalities at work, such as the race pay gap.

The emphasis on establishing industrial structures through combines rather than relying

on Unite's existing regional and local structures has ruffled some feathers in the union.

The key is that such combines must not simply become yet another round of routine meetings but rather launch pads for action.

One good sign in the run up to the conference came from a meeting of around 100 truck driver and warehousing reps.

It put out a call for a coordinated lunch break by HGV drivers and others on 1 November. How seriously the union pushes this will be one test of the new direction.

Another will be whether fights over fire and rehire, such as the current strikes by Weetabix engineers, are escalated urgently (see page 19). Will the aim be

complete victory, or just replacing employer imposed attacks with union negotiated partial concessions?

The conference also debated climate change, and passed unanimously a motion backing the Cop26 protests.

Another motion passed rightly arguing for a just transition to a decarbonised economy that defends jobs.

But it also included support for false solutions such as carbon capture and storage technologies, and nuclear power.

A contested debate ended with the conference voting to support calls for proportional representation for parliamentary elections.

Mark Thomas

EDUCATION

Build strike votes in the universities

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

ACTIVISTS across Britain in the UCU union have been working hard to get the highest possible vote for strikes over two separate but linked disputes.

The first dispute is around pensions.

Workers will have their pensions slashed by over 30 percent if employer body UUK savages the current University Superannuation Scheme (USS).

The second dispute is over casual contracts, a real term pay rise, workload and equal pay.

Over 150 higher education institutions have been balloted for either or both disputes.

Strikes will go ahead in any individual institution where the turnout requirements are met.

Carlo Morelli UCU Dundee university branch co-chair told Socialist Worker how he and other members of this branch are getting the vote out.

"We've been emailing members three times a week. And we have emailed out



RECENT STRIKES at the RCA have showed the mood

materials about the ballot itself. Texting members has also worked.

"We went from a 5 percent response rate to texts at the start of the week to a 15 percent response rate.

"It's no surprise not everyone opens or responds to their emails, as increased workloads means that they are already swamped with them. These methods aren't

only useful for getting people to vote. They are useful for recording just how many people have actually voted."

"Already we think about 25 percent of members have voted.

"This is around the same at this point if not more than what we have got in previous ballots."

The Tories' anti-trade union laws mean that unions

must reach a 50 percent turnout to move forward with strikes. But Carlo remains optimistic.

"There is a way to go to get over the threshold in terms of turnout, but if branches stick to the get the vote out techniques, then we will have enough votes to strike."

"Protests and rallies will also be an essential part of building up support for the strikes.

On Tuesday of this week, the UCU organised a Get the Vote Out rally at the Senate house building in central London.

Balloting

The date of the protest marked the exact halfway point of the balloting window.

Speakers included UCU general secretary Jo Grady and CWU union general secretary Dave Ward.

Pushing hard to get the vote out is vital. Beginning strikes before the Christmas holidays has the power to hit university bosses hardest.

It will take sustained action, and appeals for solidarity from students and other unions, to win.

FOOD WORKERS

Weetabix workers need to escalate their action now

WEETABIX workers entered their sixth week of strikes this week against plans to fire and rehire around 70 engineers in Northamptonshire.

The plans will see the Unite union members lose up to £5,000 a year.

Tory MPs defeated a bill to outlaw fire and rehire that was put forward by Barry Gardiner MP in parliament last week.

Junior business minister Paul Scully spoke for more than 40 minutes to ensure the bill ran out of time.

The Tories claim they oppose fire and rehire but want to leave it up to bosses to have a rethink rather than pass laws.

And they demand that companies gong bust must have the option of slashing pay.

But nearly 70 percent of firms using fire and rehire—including Weetabix—make a profit.

Unite general secretary Sharon Graham posted on social media, "The politicians have failed, it is time for the trade union movement to take the lead.

"If we are forced outside of the law to defend working people, so be it.

"Enough is enough."

Graham must be ready to put her words into action quickly.

With the Weetabix strikes currently set to finish by the end of November, Unite has to up the pressure on bosses to prevent fire and hire.

Shifting the Weetabix strike to an all-out dispute, as opposed to a series of 48-hour strikes, would ensure a greater chance of success.

But Unite has to be willing to put its money where its mouth is and to fully financially support its members on strike.

● Messages of support to Sean. Kettle@unitetheunion.org

CARE WORKERS



Rallying on Saturday at Holyrood

PICTURE: GMB SCOTLAND

STAGECOACH



A mass picket last week

PICTURE: UNITE WALES

Pay fight in South Wales

BUS DRIVERS working for Stagecoach in South Wales renewed their strike over pay on Monday.

Workers in the Unite union hit the Cwmbran, Blackwood and Brynmawr depots

The action began on Sunday 18 October. Talks at the Acas arbitration service did not produce any acceptable offer.

Stagecoach has refused a demand to pay drivers £10.50 an hour. Instead bosses offered only £10.10 an hour—and with reduced sick pay and removal of paid breaks. Mohammed

Ismail, a Stagecoach driver for seven years, told the South Wales Argus newspaper, "I worked six days a week, right the way through the pandemic and got nothing for it, no thank you.

"We made the profit for the shareholders.

"All we are asking for is a pound extra to live on. This is not a want, it is a need."

Bosses outrageously described the £10.50 an hour claim as part of "fantasy pay demands".

● Tweet messages of support to twitter.com/UniteWales Ian Thomas

November action in NE

MORE THAN 800 drivers, engineers, cleaners, supervisors and managers at Stagecoach North East have voted overwhelmingly to hold 12 days of strikes over pay.

Stagecoach North East is the trading name for firms in North East England—Busways Travel Ltd and Cleveland Transit Ltd.

Workers voted 92 percent vote in favour of strikes.

The 24-hour strikes are on 8, 10, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 30 November and on 2 and 4 December.

They will hit two depots in the Newcastle area at Slatyford and Walkergate as well as South Shields, Sunderland and on Teesside at Stockton and Hartlepool.

Stagecoach bosses use "divide and rule" with different rates of pay at different depots.

And they have offered just a 2 percent increase for this year.

Last week the RPI inflation figure was 4.9 percent.

ROYAL MAIL

No to Llanelli victimisation

POSTAL WORKERS at a Royal Mail delivery office in Llanelli, South Wales, were set to strike again this week in defence of a sacked colleague.

Members of the CWU union are demanding that bosses reinstate their workmate Gary Evans.

The workers already held a strong one-day strike in his defence earlier this month—with 98 percent of them voting for action and only management crossing the picket line.

Their next strike was set to take place on Thursday of this week.

The CWU union tweeted, "We can't go into the details of the case but suffice to say the whole office is with their colleague."

Royal Mail bosses have to be stopped from these victimisations.

● Send messages of support c.w.u@btconnect.com

Scottish care workers protest for £15 an hour

CARE WORKERS and the GMB union rallied outside the Scottish Parliament last Saturday to call for a £15 an hour minimum wage.

Health Secretary Humza Yousaf earlier this month announced a pay rise for care staff, but only to a

minimum of £10.02 an hour.

GMB general secretary Gary Smith told protesters that care workers would "summon the spirit of the Glasgow women's strike". This battle in 2018 ended in big payouts after years of underpaying female workers.

ROUND-UP

REFUSE collectors in Sheffield, who are outsourced to Veolia, will strike from 1 November after the company offered a below-inflation pay rise.

The GMB union members have also seen constant attacks on their terms and conditions for years.

Over 80 percent of workers voted for strikes.

Further strike dates are planned throughout November.

REFUSE WORKERS in the Derbyshire Dales continued their strike last week.

The members of the GMB

union who are outsourced to Serco are demanding a pay rise and more respect from management.

CLEANERS AT the London Elizabeth Hotel have won back £4,733 furlough payments that were withheld from them by outsourcer Pridegreen.

The IWGB union members have fought a lively campaign.

Mildre, a cleaner at London Elizabeth said, "We've had to fight every day to get them to pay our wages. Only the protest finally forced them to keep their word."

SUNAK'S BUDGET FOR THE RICH AND BOSSES

by ISABEL RINGROSE

TORY chancellor Rishi Sunak's budget and three-year spending review mean continued attacks on working class people.

We know that even though Socialist Worker went to press before he unveiled his plans on Wednesday.

No doubt there will be some recycled spending pledges such as the money for transport outside London.

In advance of his speech Sunak was forced to admit that most of the money had already been put forward.

Sunak was set to announce the end of this year's public sector pay freeze.

Compensation

But there won't be any compensation for the money lost.

And we know that he won't call for a 15 percent rise for NHS workers.

There won't be a restoration of the £20 a week Universal Credit cut and an extension of the increase to all claimants.

There won't be a return now of the pensions triple lock that the Tories broke an election promise to abandon.

There won't be real action over soaring fuel prices and

RISHI SUNAK with the rich at the Global Investment Summit dinner last week

rising rents. Sunak's officials did confirm that the minimum wage for workers aged 23 and over will rise from £8.91 an hour to £9.50.

But a worker on the minimum wage affected by the removal of the universal credit uplift, higher national insurance contributions and a freeze in income tax personal

allowances, will still be £807 worse off a year from April.

And that's before taking into account the expected rise in gas and electricity prices next year.

Sunak was expected to cut a tax surcharge on bank profits by more than 60 percent.

The chancellor's priority is keeping the City of London

happy. The surcharge will fall from eight to three percent from April 2023.

Banks pay tax at a rate of 27 percent on their profits—19 percent corporation tax and 8 percent surcharge.

Sunak had promised to raise corporation tax to 25 percent, so will now

drop the surcharge. And there's also money to attack refugees.

Border Force cutters will be replaced by 11 new vessels. There will be £700 million to harden Britain's borders and hurl back desperate people seeking safety and a better life.

This includes £628 million

“to modernise and digitalise the border”.

Sunak will also say there is more money for the NHS.

But it's far less than what's needed, and it is for capital spending—buildings and equipment—when the most immediate crisis is the lack of workers (see pages 4&5).

A decades-long rundown in the NHS workforce, and a lack of planning to produce sufficient staff, now mean a crisis.

The Health Foundation charity estimates it will take 4,000 more doctors and 17,000 more nurses just to clear the immediate backlog caused by the Tories' handling of the pandemic.

Pay

Instead the government is driving workers away by cutting real terms pay and ignoring the reality of stressed-out workers.

The central question is who will pay for the pandemic.

It ought to be the rich who have prospered during the pandemic. Instead Sunak wants working class people to bear the cost.

And while that happens Labour makes only the mildest criticisms.

Asked on Monday what his “big idea” was, Keir Starmer replied “cut business rates”.

Cuts led to 57,500 more deaths and shorter life expectancies, reports say

A REPORT in the run-up to the budget showed that Tory-imposed poverty caused over 50,000 more deaths between 2010 to 2015 than expected.

Austerity driven cuts to the NHS, public health and social care have also caused a slowdown in life expectancy.

The study was reported in the BMJ Open journal.

It found that From 2010 to 2014-5, there were 57,500 more deaths than there would have been had public sector spending growth matched that of the previous decade.

These figures only cover the first five years of

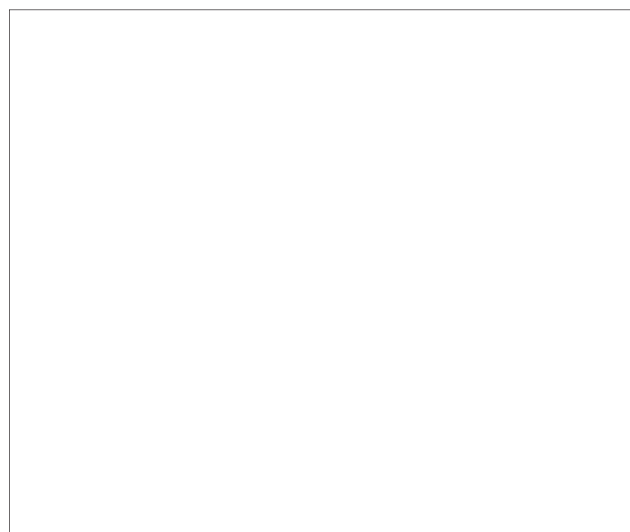
austerity, meaning many more are expected to have died in the last six years.

Real spending on social care rose by 2.2 percent between 2001-02 and 2009-10, but fell by 1.57 percent between 2010-11 and 2014-15.

The loss of social care funding caused a staggering 23,662 additional deaths according to the study conducted by the university of York.

And that was just the start of the toll.

Healthcare spending rose by 3.82 percent in the first period, but only by 0.41 percent



Marching against austerity in 2016

in the latter. Cuts to healthcare spending led to 33,888 extra deaths.

Meanwhile another study published in the Lancet medical journal reported that life expectancy has plummeted in areas in the north of England over the last decade.

The gap with the richest areas has also soared.

The parts of England worst hit were urban areas such as Blackpool, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle.

Analysis of the deaths in England between 2002 and 2019 found that life expectancy rose in most

places during the first decade of this century.

But the sharp decline began from 2010—when Tory prime minister David Cameron's cuts were introduced.

There is a 27 year gap in life expectancy between a man living in a rich neighbourhood in London's Kensington and Chelsea, and a man in Blackpool.

In parts of the north life expectancy hit below 70 for men and 75 for women. The average life expectancy for men in Britain is 79 years, and just below 83 for women.

Tory cuts kill.